

Orlando Bible Students Newsletter

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The Prince of Peace

Despite numerous conferences, negotiations and efforts to establish peace, no true and lasting peace exists between nations, between ethnic groups, between religions, or between the various socio-economic groups in today's world.

Man has fought two world wars and innumerable smaller conflicts to bring peace. Instead, they have brought nothing but more conflict.

What does the Bible say about peace? The Apostle Paul writes about the last days of this present evil world in these terms: "While they are saying, 'Peace and safety!' then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape" (1 Thess. 5:3, *New American Standard Bible*).

Paul's words aptly describe our day of conflict and strife. There can be no peace until the reasons for conflict—selfishness, unrighteousness, inequality, and oppression—are taken away. Man has rebelled against God and his righteous laws, and this has brought conflict—between God and man, between man and his neighbor, and between man and his environment. The only way conflict can be ended is if man is brought back into harmony with God and his principles of truth and righteousness.

God gave his only begotten son Jesus—to bring man back into harmony with himself, and bring man back to peace. At his First Advent, Jesus gave his perfect human life as a ransom for Father Adam. This sacrifice was critical to releasing the human family from divine condemnation and giving them an opportunity to come back into harmony

with God. At his Second Advent, Jesus will establish his earthly kingdom, and apply the value of his sacrifice to seal the New Covenant, and bring Israel and Judah back into relationship with God (Jer. 31:31-34). He will apply the value of his sacrifice to release the human family from Adamic condemnation and the associated penalty of death (Isa. 42:6,7). Then, he will raise the dead, heal the sick, and teach the human family righteousness.

Christ's kingdom will establish a way of holiness in which a man may walk. This way will be designed to bring the willing and obedient back to perfection of heart and mind and harmony with God. Those who finish the journey, will recover everything Adam lost through sin—mental, moral, and physical perfection, sonship with God, and everlasting life. They will once again become children of God in a perfect earth (Isa. 35:5-10).

Christ's work of bringing mankind back to peace with God and with one another is described in our Lord's title "Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6, *NASB*). In Christ's kingdom there will be peace, as Isaiah writes in Isaiah 11:9 (*NASB*): "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea." Concerning this kingdom, Isaiah writes, God will bring peace to Israel "like a river" (Isa. 66:12, *NASB*).

How we long for the soon establishment of Christ's earthly kingdom which will bring true and lasting peace to all mankind. ■

**See our offer for the free booklet "Peace Through Christ's Kingdom" on the back page.*

Godliness

Godliness, or God-likeness, is something that a Christian wishes to attain to if they are truly walking in the footsteps of Jesus—“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:5). Godly contentment is something that cannot be reached in a moment. It is a result of growth in grace, and in the knowledge and love of the Heavenly Father. “Godliness with contentment is great gain” (1 Tim. 6:6).

The thought of living a life of Godliness is in contrast to living a life of worldly contentment which is based upon the love of ease and selfishness. What does this show to us? It teaches us to say ‘No’ to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present age” (Tit 2:12, *New International Version*). Another important consideration is that in God’s sight sin is exceedingly sinful and must become so in our sight (Rom. 7:13).

Since these two ways of thinking and conduct are in direct opposition to each other, a person who desires to lead a godly life can expect trials and difficult experiences in this present life. This should not, however, deter them from desiring to lead a life pleasing to the Lord (Prov. 15:16). Our Lord realized that this would be so, and he gave us these words of encouragement, “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). Having this peace of God, which comes to us through his Son, helps us to live godly lives (2 Thess. 3:3).”

Having God-likeness will be required of all when Christ’s wonderful Millennial Kingdom is established on this earth (2 Pet. 3:13). In that kingdom, “He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God” (Mic. 6:8). ■

Jesus, Our High Priest

Our Lord Jesus has many names and titles, each related to the work he has or will perform. In Hebrews 3:1, the Apostle Paul calls him the “High Priest of our profession.” Why is he given this title, and what does “of our profession” mean?

To understand this, we will need to look at the time when the nation of Israel was in the wilderness and God had instructed them to build a Tabernacle. For the Tabernacle service, Aaron was selected by God as high priest, and his sons as underpriests (Exod. 28:1; 30:30). The high priest was ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices for sin, and was to bring the people to perfection (Heb. 5:1; 7:11). Aaron was a picture of Jesus who offered himself as a ransom for Adam during his First Advent and, thus, atoned for man’s sin (1 Tim. 2:5,6; 1 John 2:1,2).

During his First Advent, our Lord also learned obedience by the things which he suffered, and “being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; Called of God an High Priest after the order of Melchizedek [a royal or kingly priest] (Heb. 5:8-10). Melchizedek, the priest and king who blessed Abraham, was a picture of the resurrected Jesus who, as a spiritual high priest, brings life first to his followers during the Gospel Age and then at his Second Advent to the rest of mankind through his earthly kingdom (Gen. 14:18-20; Heb. 7:1-3,11,12,15-17,20-28).

(Continued on next page)

Parable of the Sheep and the Goats

The parable of the sheep and the goats is recognized for both its promise to the obedient, and judgment of the disobedient (Matt. 25:31-46). In it the glorified Lord sits on his throne dividing the nations “as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats” (Matt. 25:32, *NASB*). The Lord is both on his throne and glorified. This reveals that the parable applies to the 1000-year reign of Christ and his church (Rev. 20:4). Colossians 3:4 affirms that the completed church will be present during this judgment. This is the time of Christ’s promised earthly kingdom, which will bless all the families of the earth. 1 Corinthians 6:2 confirms that the church will participate in this judgment of the world of mankind.

According to the parable, the world will be judged by their works of love toward one another. Each individual will show their love toward Christ through their love to one another. “Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me” (Matt. 25:40, *NASB*).

How beautiful a picture—the Prince of Peace reigning on his throne of perfect justice with his bride (the church), judging mankind according to the law of love that he gave and lived during his human life. People will be grouped according to their acts of love toward each other! Those who are sheep-like in character—humble, accepting, and obedient to the kingdom arrangement of love for all—will receive the blessings of God’s kingdom. Those who are goat-like—stubborn and self-willed, not submitting themselves to the guidance of the good shepherd and not lovingly uplifting their fellow man—will be separated from the flock.

Failing to attain this character of active love will result in becoming part of the goat class which the Lord condemns with the same judgment pronounced against the devil and his angels. This sentence of eternal fire is not one of torment, but of complete destruction. The Prince of Peace will then pour out the never-ending blessings of God on all those who developed the character of the sheep. They will live forever filled with love for one another. ■

Jesus, Our High Priest *(continued from previous page)*

Hebrews 10:20 tells us that our Lord Jesus, as our high priest, opened up a new and living way for us to follow, giving us the opportunity to become his footstep followers, which is what “our profession” means. Our Lord devoted his entire being to fulfill his Heavenly Father’s will. He presented his earthly life in sacrifice at Jordan, represented by the slain bullock in the Tabernacle picture (Lev. 16:3,6). This is what we must do, as we are admonished in Romans 6:11: “Likewise reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive [as New Creatures] unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

During the Gospel Age, Jesus serves as both our High Priest and Advocate, so that through him we may be accepted by God. He cleanses us from all sin with his blood and justifies our sacrifice that it might be acceptable to God (1 John 1:7,9). He covers our imperfections with a robe of righteousness (Isa. 61:10). If we are faithful in following Jesus, then we become part of Jesus’ Melchizadek priesthood. We will become spiritual underpriests who will reign with him for a thousand years and help bless all mankind in his earthly kingdom—“Ye are a . . . royal priesthood, . . . that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.” (Rev. 20:6; 1 Peter 2:9,10). ■

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Calendar of Events

Florida Bible Students Convention March 1-3, 2014

Howard Johnson's Hotel
230 West State Road 436
Altamonte Springs, FL 32714
[Free admission, no collection]

For further information contact:

**Orlando Bible Students
PO Box 180216, Casselberry, FL 32718-0216**

Or contact us at our website:
www.orlandobible.org

The Orlando Bible Students is a non-denominational group that meets for Bible studies and devotions on Sunday mornings at the South Seminole Masonic Lodge, Casselberry, FL and in area homes during the week.
For further information call: (407) 695-6815

Special Offer

We would like to send you a complimentary copy of the booklet, **"Peace Through Christ's Kingdom"** This booklet describes how Christ's earthly kingdom, following his Second Advent, brings peace to all mankind. For your FREE copy, call (407) 695-6815 and request a copy, or fill in your address below and mail this coupon to:

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