From Darkness to Light: The Glory of the King, Part 4

**Isaiah 9:6–7** 6 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. 7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.

It simply does not matter what our culture tells us regarding its relationship with God. It is absolutely inconsequential. Humanity has no ground, no basis and no right to dictate the terms of the relationship between humanity and its Creator Lord. The biblical doctrine of sin is crystal clear, man is dead in sin (Eph. 2.1ff.). He is depraved, he is incapable to right his wrongs, he is in unable of drawing near to God, he is devoid of the life of God, he is bankrupt of genuine communion with God, He is separated from God, he has no interest in God, he is hostile to God, and in his very nature he is a hater of God (cf. 2 Sam. 12.9; Ps. 2.1-3; John 15.23-24; Rom. 1.30; 3.9-19; 8.7-9; 1 Tim. 3.1-5; Rev. 9.20-21; 16.9-11). We wonder why the doctrine of reconciliation is repeated in Scripture, it is because of the inescapable and deplorable condition that man finds himself in. Without the “Prince of peace” he is at war with God- a war he cannot avoid and cannot win (Acts 26.14; Eph. 2.15; Jam. 4.4).

Being therefore the enemy of God, humanity faces and unthinkable future. They are the objects of his wrath, they are the cause of his displeasure, they are the means through which God will satisfy his holy indignation against sin and sinners. Because of sin man is the enemy of God and has a destiny that includes conflict with God, which will result in the judgment of God inevitably leading to the condemnation of God undergoing the damnation of God in hell (cf. Rev. 20.11-15). Therefore, there can be no peace when in reality mankind is in a crisis. The crisis then turns to madness when we recognize that mankind will not even acknowledge the crisis. They do not even want to retain God in their minds let alone face their great spiritual ordeal (cf. Rom. 1.28). Like a man whose house is on fire, whose goods and kindred are perishing before him while he simply turns from channel to channel on the television set and tunes out the impending flames; so is the person that fails to see dire condition of their souls at enmity with God. Oh the insanity of it all.

Ecclesiastes rightly sums up this state of affairs, “Madness is bound up in their hearts all their life, the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil and insanity is in their hearts throughout their lives. Afterwards they go to the dead” (Eccl. 9.3). This last messianic title reminds us of just how essential the impartation of Jesus’ peace is for our lives. But in order to grasp the peace of God in Christ we need to see it from the redemptive, experiential and eschatological perspectives.

*Redemptive Peace Of Jesus Christ*

With each aspect of the peace of Jesus Christ we have the work of Christ applied for the believer. Here it is what we can call, Christ *for* us. Redemptive peace is that peace that initiates the experience of His peace in our lives. There is no peace apart from this aspect of His peace because apart from this peace, there is no atonement, there is no propitiation, there is no imputation of our sins upon the Savior in our place. This is the peace of the cross, the peace of His blood, and the peace of our union with Christ:

**Ephesians 2:13–16** 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, 15 by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, 16 and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.

This passage in Ephesians is deeply covenantal and in reality that comes as no surprise because the matter of God’s peace is at the heart of God’s covenant dealings with His people. The peace envisioned here is the peace announced elsewhere in the prophets:

**Ezekiel 34:24–25** 24 “And I, the Lord, will be their God, and My servant David will be prince among them; I the Lord have spoken. 25 “I will make a covenant of peace with them and eliminate harmful beasts from the land so that they may live securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.

The prophet Micah declared, “this One will be our peace” (Mic. 5.5). Zechariah speaks of the “counsel of peace” that resides between Father and Son (Zech. 6.13). Jesus is the one who will “speak peace to the nations” (9.10). And in the NT even the angels announce that peace saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased” (Lk. 2.14).

If “peace” were in a verbal form, it could be summed up in the term “to reconcile” (καταλλάσσω) where God takes us from enmity to amity through the cross.

**Romans 5:10** 10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

**2 Corinthians 5:18** 18 Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation,

**2 Corinthians 5:20** 20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

Having been given peace, having peace established between us and God, we now inherit that same ministry of peace, the ministry of reconciliation; putting men and women at peace with God through the gospel. This peace however is not just a once for all phenomenon. It is an ever-increasing quality of life. It is as much an experience as much as it is a status. Our status has changed through the cross. We have gone from war with God to peace with God. Now, we also have a change in our experience. While reconciliation emphasizes Christ for us, our experience of His peace emphasizes Christ *with* us as His peace abides in us.

*Experiential Peace Of Jesus Christ*

We should begin with a qualification when speaking of our experiential peace in Christ. For, this peace is not to be mistaken with eschatological peace. Many make that mistake here. They think that experiential peace is really eschatological peace, which will be full, fail-proof, and final. No. In this world God’s peace is experienced in a tempest, in the midst of many adversaries, and in the context of holy warfare. *God’s peace for us now is a fought for peace*! We must fight to seize upon this peace. We fight indwelling sin that above all threatens to upset our peace (1 Pet. 2.11). We fight heresy which can complicate and confuse our peace (Gal. 3.1; 2 Cor. 11.3; Jude 12-13). We fight the spirit of this age that seeks to promote a pseudo-peace, a man-centered peace, and a circumstantial peace that is superficial and moralistic but not true and not lasting peace. Like Jeremiah says, the superficial say, “peace, peace, but there is no peace” (Jer. 6.14). We also fight the enemy of our souls, the devil, who seeks to rob us of our peace by stealing our confidence, seducing us away from faith, and casting us into doubt in our minds and unbelief in our hearts (1 Pet. 5.8-9). For the Christian life, the experience of peace means war! Therefore, it should not surprise us to find imperatives, commands, directives to pursue this peace with great rigor and zeal:

**Colossians 3:15** 15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.

**Philippians 4:6–7** 6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

More than simply a tranquil state of mind, or a therapeutic phenomenon, the peace of Christ is also what we could call a spiritually objective reality. His peace resides with us. At times this may not be detectible in storm of our trials especially as we waver in our faith; but His peace is ours and it is here to stay because He is here to stay. His peace is thus to be interpreted in the most personal of ways. It is a peace that is one with His presence:

**John 14:27** 27 “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.

**John 16:33** 33 “These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.”

To reiterate the abiding presence of His peace among His people, in the context of commissioning them, the resurrected Christ imparts “peace” to His disciples as He appears to them (John 20.19), breathes on them (John 20.21-22), and sends them on their global mission to spread His peace to the nations (John 20.23-26). It was in that very context that one disciple was unwilling to believe in His peace because he was unwilling to believe in His resurrected presence. When Jesus allowed Thomas to see His hands, to reach into His side and feel His flesh, certainly then Thomas felt His peace (John 20.27-29). The resurrection makes it so that though His peace may waver in us, it does not actually waver at all. As sure as Jesus will bear the scars from the nails on His hands for all eternity, His personal peace will endure forever.

*Eschatological Peace Of Jesus Christ*

This brings us to the final installment of peace, His future eschatological peace. Just as Christ is for us in redemptive peace, with us in experiential peace, He is also *before us* as our eschatological peace. Isaiah and the Prophets are not alone in their messianic eschatology. The Psalms are littered with the same messianic expectation of peace in association with the eschaton and the Prince of Peace who alone can bring in lasting peace. Solomon envisions as much when he writes of the heir of the King, the messiah:

**Psalm 72:1–7** 1 Give the king Your judgments, O God, And Your righteousness to the king’s son. 2 May he judge Your people with righteousness And Your afflicted with justice. 3 Let the mountains bring peace to the people, And the hills, in righteousness. 4 May he vindicate the afflicted of the people, Save the children of the needy And crush the oppressor. 5 Let them fear You while the sun endures, And as long as the moon, throughout all generations. 6 May he come down like rain upon the mown grass, Like showers that water the earth. 7 In his days may the righteous flourish, And abundance of peace till the moon is no more.

Like much of the material in Isaiah, the theme of peace is climactic only at the eschatological level when God brings into view a new heaven and a new earth. At that time true peace will prevail. It will no longer be partial, limited, and obscured by the fluctuations of our experience. Then it will be lasting, firm, steady, and every-increasing peace.

**Isaiah 66:10–13** 10 “Be joyful with Jerusalem and rejoice for her, all you who love her; Be exceedingly glad with her, all you who mourn over her, 11 That you may nurse and be satisfied with her comforting breasts, That you may suck and be delighted with her bountiful bosom.” 12 For thus says the Lord, “Behold, I extend peace to her like a river, And the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream; And you will be nursed, you will be carried on the hip and fondled on the knees. 13 “As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you; And you will be comforted in Jerusalem.”

In other words, the Church will become the darling daughter of our great God and King. There is nothing more peaceful, more fulfilling, and there is no greater quality of life than to have a child delight in his/her father and to have a father or mother delight in the joy of their children. Our family joy is but a glimmer of the divine love of God for His children. What a glorious metaphor!

*He is our hope now*

But as our future peace, His peace begins now. As He imparts the kingdom to us, gives us eternal life, and makes us fellow heirs with Him through Union with Christ- the eschaton purifies us even now:

**1 John 3:2–3** 2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. 3 And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

*He is our Savior to come*

Our future hope is also strictly future, reserved for the future, and in total anticipation for the future. However, even in this future anticipation, our hope rests not in an event, neither simply in a future change or the end of our warfare; our hope is in *Him*. That is, in His presence so that our future hope is imminently *personal*. We await a *Savior*.

**1 Thessalonians 1:9–10** 9 For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, 10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

**Philippians 3:20–21** 20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; 21 who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

*He is our Treasure forever*

All of this is bound up to His resurrection. As our Forerunner, He lays out the path we must all take, the path onward and upward beyond the veil and into the holy place (Heb. 6.19-20). There in the true tabernacle, in the true temple, and in very beauty of God’s inner sanctuary presence, we will bask in the luminosity of His eternal holiness, and He will illumine us (Rev. 22.5). And this illumination will consist of an every-increasing participation in the true *Shalom* so that we will live in a habitation of peace forever. Isaiah saw this future and spoke of it repeatedly. But what he saw and what he spoke of is our common salvation. Isaiah’s hope is our hope, his future is our future, his peace is our peace:

**Isaiah 32:15–20** 15 Until the Spirit is poured out upon us from on high, And the wilderness becomes a fertile field, And the fertile field is considered as a forest. 16 Then justice will dwell in the wilderness And righteousness will abide in the fertile field. 17 And the work of righteousness will be peace, And the service of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever. 18 Then my people will live in a peaceful habitation, And in secure dwellings and in undisturbed resting places; 19 And it will hail when the forest comes down, And the city will be utterly laid low. 20 How blessed will you be, you who sow beside all waters, Who let out freely the ox and the donkey.