

The Word's Eye View

The Word's Eye View is a newspaper column written by
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Why Isn't There Peace on Earth? (Article 75)

“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” (Luke 2:13,14) As much as most of us enjoy the fuzzy, warm feelings of Christmas and the thought of world peace that should accompany the angelic message, the reality of history is far more sobering.

On the basis of the computation in the Moscow Gazette, Gustave Valbert in his day could report that from the year 1496 BC to AD 1861 (3358 years), there were 227 years of peace and 3130 years of war... or thirteen years of war to every year of peace. With the last three centuries, there have been 286 wars in Europe, and he added that from the year 1500 BC to AD 1860 more than 8000 treaties of peace, meant to remain in force forever, were concluded. The average time they remained in force was two years.

Lacking precise statistics for the past 150 years, it remains obvious that mankind has not improved these numbers when one considers the wars in which America alone has been involved. It is small wonder that some have become cynical concerning the Nativity story. A backward look demands an answer to “where is peace?” Either the heavenly host conveyed a total misrepresentation of the truth or the general public is operating under a misunderstanding of the delivered communiqué. As we continue to grope for the elusive phantom of peace, it may be advisable to give God the benefit of the doubt (there’s a new concept) and search for a deeper theological context.

The Lord, without apology to anyone, has promised a time of unqualified tranquility. “For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.” (Isaiah 9:6,7) The pressing question is when? Could it be that the first advent of Christ necessitated a conditioned promise predicated upon the willingness of the human race to receive the Prince of Peace? The populous was more than happy to embrace Him if it meant political emancipation (as illustrated on Palm Sunday), but when the primary purpose of His birth was emphasized (“And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.” Matthew 1:21), Christ was firmly rejected. Consequently, the pledge of peace was not eradicated but only delayed. In the meantime we have to deal with “wars and rumors of wars” that Jesus Himself prophesied.

Wherever the Christmas story is told there is a natural tendency for human optimism to navigate the ship, all the while failing to calculate the presence of insidious ice bergs below the surface. Joel Rosenberg has captured the thought well in his book, “The Last Days,” a sequel to “The Last Jihad.” Like Tom Clancy, he writes novels based upon actual events and circumstances. Dr. Mordechai, the fictitious former head of Mossad, states, “The problem with you Americans is that you don’t believe in evil - you guys at the CIA and the FBI, and definitely the guys at State, don’t properly anticipate

horrible, catastrophic events because you don't really believe in the presence of evil, the presence of a dark and wicked and nefarious spiritual dimension that drives some men to do the unthinkable." This unmistakable truth flies in the face of everything that Americans want desperately to cling to - Peace on Earth! Failure to acknowledge the need of forgiveness never produces friendship with God.

Lest we succumb to the misery of abject pessimism, it should be noted that the Bible speaks of an internal peace that is being offered during this dispensation of confusion. The apostle Paul observed, "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:7) This wonderful peace mentioned must be preceded by "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Romans 5:1) Peace with God brings the peace of God.

This glorious doctrine is well illustrated in the famous painting showing the robin building her nest behind but ever so close to the raging waterfall. During these very uncertain times, my family and I wish all of our readers a personal, enduring peace that comes from above.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!