

Christmas Peace

participating in God's present of peace

Luke 2: 8-21

Christies Beach Baptist Church
December 05, 221
Stephen Spence

Luke 2: 8- 20

And Mary gave
birth to Jesus...



"...I am bringing you **good news of great joy** for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord..."

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those
whom he favors!"



εἰρήνη

in our external world

In the NT, **eirēnē** means more than the absence of war. It is used to mean harmony, wholeness, and well-being.

JK Ridgeway

The concept of peace as inner tranquility is not unknown in the Bible, but it is not the primary focus of eirēnē. Peace is experienced collectively, in community.

שָׁלוֹם

richly wholistic

In the OT, **shalom** included “everything necessary to healthful living: good health, a sense of wellbeing, an experience of blessing, the cohesiveness of the community, relationship to relatives and their state of being, and anything else deemed necessary for everything to be in order.”

Claus Westermann

When Jesus and the early church, including Paul in his writings, speak of “peace” they are thinking of God’s “shalom.”

Pax Romana

27 BCE — 180 CE

for the oppressed

Jesus: "Peace I impart to you, my peace I give to you; **not like the world gives, I give to you.**"

John 14:24

Roman peace was imposed by violence and maintained by threats of violence. It existed for the benefit of the powerful and was used to exploit the powerless.

God's Shalom

The gospel of
peace through
Jesus Christ...
Acts 10:36

In Luke's telling of the gospel, God's kingdom is a kingdom of peace, and "God bestows salvation on the people in the form of peace."
(G. Yamasaki)

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those
whom he favors!"



Luke 2:14-15

God's Shalom

The gospel of
peace through
Jesus Christ...
Acts 10:36

God's kingdom of peace includes justice for the perpetrators of violence and the making of amends to the survivors of that violence.

Jesus preached, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." (Mt 5:9)

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace **among those
whom he favors!**"



Luke 2:14-15

A Christmas Gift to share

Shalom, eirēnē, and *pax romana* have in common that they are a community experience. For first century Christians, God's Christmas gift of peace would be received as a present to share.

Christmas peace must be received and shared
as a **together gift**.

This Christmas, God has for you the gift of his *shalom*, which is a gift we both **receive and become** for others.

There is
evil
in this
world...

But there are peace makers everywhere
– children of God – who work individually
and collectively to

- actively promote the ways of Jesus
- love their neighbours
- befriend the lonely
- protect the vulnerable
- comfort the broken
- seek justice

Make us a channel
of your peace...



Creative
Corner

Monthly
Morning Teas

Playgroup

Emergency
Relief



Justice 2021

peace presents under
our Christmas tree

Peace Prayer
of "St Francis"

*This Christmas, and every Christmas,
And everyday in between, we pray...*

God of Peace,
make me an instrument of your peace...

In each and every
one of Paul's NT
letters he blesses
the church with two
words:

grace and peace

Jesus taught us, "Blessed are the peacemakers,
for you shall be called children of the God of
Peace."

"Grace to you and peace
from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Today, and every day, "The God of Peace be with
you." Amen.