

## He Will Speak Peace

Jesus in the Psalms

*Psalm 85*

Stuart W. Bryan

### I. The Prince of Peace (Is 9:6-7)

Throughout Christmastide we rejoice that God's long-awaited King has been born. Remember Isaiah:

*<sup>6</sup>For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup>Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this. (Isaiah 9:6-7)*

We can be confident that Christ will cause righteousness and peace to triumph on earth – a promise that is tasted prior to His return as men and nations turn from idolatry and worship the Living God by the power of the Spirit and that will be consummated when Christ returns again in glory.

### II. He Will Speak Peace

A. The Lord's favor and forgiveness in the past (1-3 cf. Ps 126:1-3)

It is likely that this psalm was composed following our fathers' return to the land after the Babylonian captivity. The joy associated with this return is well captured in Psalm 126:

*<sup>1</sup>When the LORD brought back the captivity of Zion, We were like those who dream. <sup>2</sup>Then our mouth was filled with laughter, And our tongue with singing. Then they said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."  
<sup>3</sup>The LORD has done great things for us, And we are glad. (Psalm 126:1-3)*

God in His mercy had forgiven His people, turned away from His wrath, and thus restored them to the land. We can see how these phrases capture the joy and delight of the sons of Korah in God's mercy. And they rightly capture our delight in Christ's work as well (Lk 2:14).

B. The Lord's anger and indignation in the present (4-7)

We know from reading Ezra and Nehemiah that external and internal problems plagued the Jews who returned from Babylon. As the sons of Korah looked upon these difficulties, they cried out for God to *restore them* once again, to *turn away His anger* from them and *revive them* that they might be *filled with joy*. They knew that they needed God's *mercy* and *salvation*.

C. The Lord's peace and salvation promised for the future (8-13)

The final section reminds us to seek God's mercy and salvation confident that He will indeed answer the prayers of His people. He will cause His kingdom to come, His will to be done, on earth as it is in heaven. He will indeed save us and cause *righteousness* to triumph in the earth. We need not fear that His purposes will fail. Christ has established His Church, and *the gates of hades will not prevail against her* (Mt 16:18). So we can be confident, even in times of suffering and setback for God's kingdom, that *His salvation is near to those who fear Him, that glory may dwell in our land* (9). He will cause *mercy, truth, righteousness, and peace* to dwell together (10-11).

### III. The Nature of Shalom

#### A. The Meaning of Biblical Shalom

*The Bible Project* video on peace, *shalom*, observes:

*“The most basic meaning of shalom is complete or whole. The word can refer to a stone that has a perfect whole shape with no cracks. It can also refer to a completed stone wall that has no gaps and no missing bricks. Shalom refers to something that’s complex with lots of pieces that’s in a state of completeness, wholeness... [Thus] The core idea is that life is complex, full of moving parts and relationships and situations, and when any of these is out of alignment or missing, your shalom breaks down. Life is no longer whole. It needs to be restored.”*

Biblical *shalom*, therefore, is not the mere absence of conflict. The absence of conflict forms a foundation for restored relationships. Thus, when God *speaks peace to His people* (8) then \_\_\_\_\_ *will dwell in our land* (9) – everything will be in its place, functioning as it is supposed to function. *Mercy* and *truth* will work in harmony; *righteousness* and *peace* will kiss; *truth* will be prized among men on *earth* and God will send down His *righteousness from heaven* (11). This is *shalom*.

As human beings, we were created in a fourfold relationship – *upward with \_\_\_\_\_, inward with ourselves, outward with our neighbors, and downward with \_\_\_\_\_*. The fall distorts all these relationships to one extent or another. *Shalom*, therefore, is the restoration of these relationships, beginning *with God* (Rom 1:18; 5:1; 8:7). We cannot have *shalom* without God.

#### B. The Promise of Shalom (cf. Ps 72:1-7; Zech 9:9-10)

Notice, therefore, that our psalm holds out promise of *shalom*. As we look to the Lord in faith and trust in Him, *“He will speak \_\_\_\_\_ to His people and to His saints”* (8). Zechariah declares:

*“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey. <sup>10</sup>1 will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; The battle bow shall be cut off. He shall speak peace to the nations; His dominion shall be ‘from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth.’ (Zechariah 9:9–10)*

*<sup>1</sup>Give the king Your judgments, O God, And Your righteousness to the king’s Son. <sup>2</sup>He will judge Your people with righteousness, And Your poor with justice. <sup>3</sup>The mountains will bring peace to the people, And the little hills, by righteousness. <sup>4</sup>He will bring justice to the poor of the people; He will save the children of the needy, And will break in pieces the oppressor. <sup>5</sup>They shall fear You As long as the sun and moon endure, Throughout all generations. <sup>6</sup>He shall come down like rain upon the grass before mowing, Like showers that water the earth. <sup>7</sup>In His days the righteous shall flourish, And abundance of peace, Until the moon is no more. (Psalm 72:1–7)*

Christ has come to bring *salvation* and *speak \_\_\_\_\_* (built on *justice* and *righteousness*) *to all nations*.

#### C. Praying and working for Shalom (cf. Is 26:1-5)

Jesus declares, *“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God”* (Mt 5:9). Our task is to pray for and labor for \_\_\_\_\_. We are to strive to *“live peaceably with all men”* (Rom 12:18). With believers, we are to *“endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”* (Eph 4:3). With our community, we are to *“seek the peace of the city where God placed us”* (cf. Jer 29:7). We are to prize peace and labor for it. Yet we cannot achieve peace by sacrificing \_\_\_\_\_. We cannot declare, *“Peace! Peace!’ when there is no peace”* (Jer 6:14). We must shun all lies and deceit. Thus, we warn those practicing unrighteousness, *“there is no peace,’ says Yabweh, ‘for the wicked”* (Is 48:22).

### IV. Conclusion