

Can There Be True Peace for Israel?

The story goes something like this: a Jewish person considering whether Yeshua is really the Messiah asks his rabbi, "Could it be that Messiah has already come, and that Yeshua is His name?"

The rabbi walks over to the window and looks out, shakes his head and with a sigh declares: "He can't be the true Messiah because there's still no peace. We know that when Messiah comes there will be peace everywhere."

Is it true that Messiah is to bring peace? And if Yeshua is really the Messiah, where is this peace?

The Promise of Peace

The desire for true peace, which involves more than merely an end of political hostilities, is universal among the sane nations of this world. The Hebrew word for peace, "*shalom*," has in it the idea of "completeness" or "wholeness." Because of sin we are all "incomplete." The Scriptures tell us that sin separates us from God, from each other, and even from ourselves (Isaiah 59:1-2). However, the *shalom* of God fulfills us perfectly and completely.

This is the very desire of God, who in Aaron's blessing states, "*May the Lord give you peace*" (Num. 6:26). The Psalmist writes "*The Lord will bless His people with peace*" (Ps. 29:11), and in the prophets, Messiah is even called "*Prince of Peace*" (Is. 9:6). In fact, when Messiah reigns, peace will be His Kingdom's theme (Is. 2:1-4; 9:4-5, 7; Zechariah. 9:9-10).

This universal peace of Messiah is based, however, on each individual first having a personal peace through a right

relationship with God: *"You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in You"* (Is. 26:3).

Thus when each person receives peace from God, they can share and live in that peace within their family, community, country and world. This peace is like having a million dollars to give to a friend: if you don't have it, of course you can't give it.

The Rejection of Peace

The Scriptures prophesy that God's peace would actually be rejected when it was to be offered. Isaiah the prophet wrote that Messiah, the Prince of Peace, would come to make peace between God and His people, and that Messiah would be rejected. When Messiah would be rejected, the peace He brings would be rejected with Him. But why would He be rejected?

1. *"He had no beauty or majesty that we should look at Him, and nothing in His appearance that we should be attracted to Him"* (Is. 53:2).

For people attracted to externals, Messiah would be too ordinary looking: there was nothing about His appearance to command our attention. However, for those who were looking for true peace with God, it was Messiah's internal character that made Him stand out.

2. *"He was a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering. Surely, He took upon Himself our griefs and sorrows, yet we considered Him stricken by God and afflicted by Him"* (Isaiah 53:3-4).

For people desirous of comfort and convenience, this one suffered too much. No decent person wants to associate with someone who attracts trouble the way Yeshua did. However, Scripture tells us that He suffered for our sins, not His own: *"The Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all"* (Isaiah 53:6).

3. *"He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, as a sheep before the shearers is silent, so He did not open His mouth"* (Is. 53:7).

Yeshua was too compliant, too passive. He wasn't exactly the "John Wayne" type of warrior king. Many wanted a Messiah who would come to vanquish the enemies of Israel and thus bring a forced peace. Yeshua's humility was despised and rejected, for He came not to protect His own life, but to be an offering for our sins: *"the Lord makes His life a guilt offering"* (Is. 53:10).

Suppose I came to your house with a beautiful cake, but as soon as you saw it was me standing there, you slammed the door in my face. If you did this, would you expect to still get the cake? Of course not. Reject me, and you reject all that I bring with me. So, why isn't there "peace?" Reject the Prince of Peace and you reject the very peace that He brings.

The Provision of Peace

The New Covenant Scriptures repeat the promise of Isaiah 26:3 (see above). All who will trust in Messiah and the atonement that He made for sins, receives ...

- Peace with God (Rom. 5:1)
- Peace of mind and heart (Phil. 4:7)
- Peace with one another (Eph. 2:14-15)

The Scriptures also teach that one day Israel will acknowledge the Messiah and receive His salvation and peace: *"The stone which the builders rejected shall become the capstone!"* (Ps. 118:22-26). In light of that event, we are commanded to *"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem"* (Ps. 122:6). In that day, peace will be worldwide, even as the Scriptures promised.

A View of the Future

A friend of mine who serves in the IDF (Israeli Defense Force)

shared a story with me which serves to illustrate this coming day: As he was on patrol with his squad one night in Gaza, *Joel, an Israeli believer in Yeshua, came upon a van which was parked in a suspicious place.

As Joel approached the vehicle, a man came out of a nearby house and walked toward toward the van. As he questioned the man, Joel found that he was a Palestinian pastor—a believer in Yeshua—visiting some of his congregants. The on-looking squad watched in amazement as the Israeli soldier put his rifle to his side and hugged the Palestinian man, laughing and rejoicing in the Gaza moonlight. When he returned to his men, Joel explained, “That man is my brother in the Messiah, and Messiah is the hope of our people.”

Indeed, Yeshua is the only hope for peace for Israel, as well as for all people.

**Name changed to protect the individual*

Excerpted from Sam Nadler's book, The Messianic Answer Book: Jewish Answers to Jewish Questions about the Jewish Messiah. For more information about this book, visit .

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