

Did you know . . .

The Prince of Peace

In Isaiah's prophecy about the coming Messiah, he says:

*"For a child is born to us, a son is given us;
Upon his shoulder dominion rests;
They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero,
Father-Forever, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:5).*

It is sometimes difficult to see how Jesus could be the all-powerful God who acts in human history and be the embodiment of peace in a world filled with war and violence. But this is not necessarily the kind of peace He's talking about. (John 14:27)

The Hebrew word for "peace," *shalom*, is often used in reference to an appearance of calm and tranquility of individuals, groups, and nations. The Greek word *eirene* means "harmony and concord"; Paul uses *eirene* to describe the objective of the New Testament church. But the deeper, more foundational meaning of peace is "the spiritual harmony brought about by an individual's restoration with God." *Shalom* is the gift of salvation, the bounty of Messianic blessing.

Because of Christ's sacrifice, dying for our sins, we are restored to a relationship of peace with God (Romans 5:1), "the deep, abiding peace between our hearts and our Creator that cannot be taken away (John 10:27-28) and the ultimate fulfillment of Christ's work as 'Prince of Peace.'" Christmas teaches us the truth that the gift of peace has already been granted to us in Jesus: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you."

The instruments of peace lie within us, but we often instead choose anger, bitterness, retaliation, or punishing silence. Christmas, however, hearkens us with the truth that the gifts of world and inner peace are already ours...mercy, forgiveness, humility, compassion, gentleness and patience.

Prayer: *Prince of Peace, calm our anxiety, soothe our anger and open our hearts to the Holy Spirit of reconciliation.*

Wishing you all a VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS.

Judy Pearson

