The Peace of the Kingdom of God

Another of the precious things found in the Kingdom of God is the peace and rest that reign within it. The dictionary definition: an absence of disturbance, conflict and hostility; harmony, reconciliation, understanding. To break the peace means to come into conflict with someone.

The peaceful Kingdom of Christ has often been misunderstood, even by those who say they are believers. Very few understand this heavenly standard, accept it and live by it.

Many do not see that the Lord of peace came to bring to earth the peace that governs the heavenly Kingdom, a peace found on God's way, which is perfect. (To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. Luke 1:79)

Many do not notice that the Gospel of the Kingdom is in fact the Gospel of peace. (The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ. Acts 10:36; Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. 2 Thessalonians 3:16)

When the Lord Jesus says, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," He is telling us that the peace that is in heaven must also be on earth among those who belong to Him. (Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. Luke 2:14; Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. Luke 19:38)

It is extremely important to understand that the law of peace which governs the heavenly Kingdom also governs, here on earth, the people who belong to that Kingdom. (They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. Isaiah 2:4)

All citizens born of God must keep this law, and so they must no longer learn war or resistance. They must live in perfect peace with one another, be gentle and easy to entreat, bless one another, not speak evil of one another, not be angry, not quarrel, not hold enmity, not judge one another, not resist their fellow men, and do harm to no one.

All who have chosen to keep their feet on the way of peace neither start conflicts nor enter into them. They do not resist in order to get justice for themselves. (That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. Matthew 5:39–40)

When they deal with citizens of the kingdom of darkness, conflicts may arise. To resolve the problems that come up, and to keep the peace as far as it depends on them, they will apply the law of the Kingdom above, which takes precedence over the law of the land below. (If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Romans 12:18; Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. 1 Peter 3:11)

When they are wronged, they have only one way to keep the peace that comes from above: to turn to their Master and then gladly submit to His decision. The police, the courts and the like

are not at their disposal, as they are for the citizens of the other kingdom. (Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously. 1 Peter 2:23)

This law of peace will bring trouble and suffering to those who enter the Kingdom of God. When people of the world start a conflict, the attitude of non-resistance these believers show will cost them losses and humiliation. Often they will even be humiliated and mocked by those of their own household.

So as not to break the peace and rest of heart to which they have been called, they will follow the example of their Lord. (For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps. 1 Peter 2:21; Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. Hebrews 12:14)

This peace keeps their hearts and minds in Christ. They will do nothing that would trouble their hearts or spoil their rest of heart. (And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7)

The only things they have at hand when they are persecuted are longsuffering and flight. (When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another. Matthew 10:23)

Peace and rest are the fruit of the heart's attitude, of living in righteousness, of giving up resistance, anger and judgment, and they are gained by keeping the teachings of Christ. (To be spiritually minded is life and peace. Romans 8:6; If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. Luke 19:42)

To reach the rest and quietness of the Kingdom of God, we must put into practice the teaching the Lord Jesus brought from heaven. (Judge not, that ye be not judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned; whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain; give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away; if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also; whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. Matthew 5:39–42; Of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. Luke 6:30)

Even when we are innocent, resistance produces conflict, not peace, and it can give the other person occasion to be troubled, to grow angry, or in other words, to sin. (But judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. Romans 14:13; It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come! Luke 17:1)

In practice, whoever brings an occasion of sin is doing the work of Satan, and this is a very grave thing in God's eyes. It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should cause one… to sin. (Luke 17:2)

We must be watchful in every situation of conflict and be peacemakers. If we are at peace, we must do everything in our power so that the other person may be at peace too. (If it be possible,

as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Romans 12:18)

Those who belong to the Kingdom above pursue and seek the peace that comes from walking after the things above. (To be spiritually minded is life and peace. Romans 8:6; Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Matthew 5:9)

The Lord Jesus, as the representative of the Kingdom of God, was the first to keep this teaching of non-resistance, of keeping the peace, absolutely, and He taught us to live just as He did. (If any man will come after me… follow me. Luke 9:23; He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. 1 John 2:6)

We can see the Lord's attitude when He was asked for the temple tax. Although He was not obliged to pay it, He did everything in His power to avoid conflict and disturbance, so as not to give others an occasion to sin. (What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea… Matthew 17:24–27)

When He was seized to be put to death, He did not resist; He did not let the conflict grow, but allowed Himself to be led as a lamb to the slaughter. (He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. Isaiah 53:7)

The Lord had a heart full of peace, at rest, which was not troubled when that conflict arose. His lack of any spirit of resistance shows us what the citizens of Christ's Kingdom must be like. (Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him. Matthew 26:50)

At the opposite extreme we see the agitation and anger in His disciple Peter. He resisted and took an active part in the conflict. The agitation that showed itself in Peter is characteristic of the nature of the kingdom of darkness. (And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Ephesians 2:3; "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." Isaiah 57:20)

As citizens of the Kingdom, our natural instinct to resist must be crucified, so that peace and rest may come into our souls. (Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me… and ye shall find rest unto your souls. Matthew 11:29)

Personal reflection:

- Do you pursue peace with all people as a treasure of great price?

- If a conflict arises, can you say, like the Lord Jesus, "Friend, wherefore art thou come?"

- Do you remain at peace as the Lord Jesus did? Or are you troubled like Peter? (And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7)

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