

PRINCE OF PEACE



M. Basilea Schlink

To us a child is born, to us a
son is given; and the government
will be upon his shoulder, and
his name will be called 'Wonderful
Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.'
Of the increase of his government
and of peace there will be no end,
upon the throne of David, and over
his kingdom, to establish it, and
uphold it with justice and with
righteousness from this time forth
and for evermore. *Isaiah 9:6-7*

Christmas! In the crib lies a Child loved by the heavenly Father and on whom His favour rests, a Child dearly loved by all believers: Jesus. Every year on His birthday there is rejoicing and thanksgiving: unto us is born a Child, who is our Saviour and Redeemer. He is a divine Child, shining like the sun, for He comes from the Father's presence. He is eternal Love, who with His radiance has the power to spread joy and brightness everywhere. Just as the sun has many rays, so the Child has many names. He is called, for instance, WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR and MIGHTY GOD. Down through the ages Christians have known Jesus as such.

In dark-est mid- night a Ba- by
 Boy From heav- en brought down great
 ti- dings of joy. We are be-
 loved and our Fa- ther is near;
 Noth- ing can harm us, not
 sin, pain or fear, Noth- ing can
 harm us, not sin, pain or fear.

O Child of joy, heaven's brightest light,
 Nothing we lack when You dawn on our sight.
 Each grief of ours will grieve Your loving heart;
 You save from sin and make fears all depart,
 You save from sin and make fears all depart.

O Child of joy, to us heaven You bring,
And dearest Child, of heaven's glory You sing.
After our battles and suffering's dark night
You have prepared for us ceaseless delight,
You have prepared for us ceaseless delight.

O Child of joy, come into my heart.
My Jesus Child, You make sadness depart.
In pain and sorrow Your love comfort brings;
In every trial with joy I can sing,
In every trial with joy I can sing.



Yet this Child has another name, which particularly captures the longing of humanity: PRINCE OF PEACE. Referring to Him, Scripture says, 'Of peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom.' But to this day the opposite seems to be true: terrorism still plagues Israel, and indeed the whole world. A recent estimate puts the number of children affected by armed conflicts worldwide at a billion⁹), and new trouble spots keep springing up.

What Jesus prophesied for the end times is coming true before our eyes: 'You will hear of wars and rumours of wars... Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places ... And because wickedness is multiplied, most men's love will grow cold' (Matthew 24:6-12). 'Sin is a reproach to any people' (Proverbs 14:34) – a nation's downfall. Sin breeds hatred and consequently war. The canker needs to be dealt with from within.

We have the promise of our Lord Jesus: 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid' (John 14:27). When He says He gives us peace, it is because He is peace itself. He did not retaliate when struck – though He had the power to do so – but was like a lamb led to the slaughter (Isaiah 53:7). He kept the peace as an innocent Lamb wronging no one.

You came in - to this world as a
lit - tle Child Laid in a low - ly
man - ger, a Lamb un - de - filed. How
shall I ev - er thank You, my dear - est
Lord, For no - where in the world
can such bound - less love be found!

O little Lamb, You lie there
so helpless and weak,
Yielded to pain and suffering,
submissive and meek,
Not minding how You're treated,
in perfect peace
Surrendered to whatever
the Father has decreed.





Love radiates from the crib, from this Child, who has come to bring us peace. And this peace He gives to those who follow Him along His pathway, forgiving when wronged, bearing no grudges, making an effort to share His love with others in daily life. Jesus really does give us peace. He pours out His peace into those who have given their hearts to Him, the Prince of Peace, and who keep the peace with their neighbour as far as it lies with them. As little lambs they follow the Lamb of God, not returning insult for insult (1 Peter 2:23) but loving, enduring and turning the other cheek when they suffer. What Jesus said to His disciples before His Passion began applies to them:

I have said this to you,
that in me you may have peace.
In the world you have tribulation;
but be of good cheer,
I have overcome the world.

John 16:33

Jesus, the Child in the manger, invites us to come to Him. He is the same today: THE PRINCE OF PEACE. From Him we can receive peace. Today we need peace. Perhaps our hearts are filled with fear. But what this Child has to give us is greater than all fears. His name is PRINCE OF PEACE, MIGHTY GOD, WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR.

Dear - est Je - sus, fear is rag - ing
Like a tem - pest deep with - in me.
Hear me cry to You for help.
Prince of Peace, You will not fail me;
As Your name says, You im - part peace,
Set - ting trou - bled hearts at ease.

Little Jesus, I can trust You,
Knowing You will always prove true
As the source of love divine.
Christmas is the time for giving,
So You'll fill to overflowing
Anxious hearts with perfect peace.



When we so frequently sense our lack of this peace, may we hear in our hearts the words Jesus said to His disciples as a grown man: 'Believe in God, believe also in me' (John 14:1). Has He ever failed us? He gives us what He has promised. He imparts to us His peace, especially when the outward circumstances seem to promise none. If in faith we receive His peace, fear will vanish and our hearts will be calm during the most severe crisis – whether at home or at work, whether caused by sickness, violence, war or disaster. As Scripture says,


HE IS
OUR PEACE


Ephesians 2:14


He will prove Himself to be our peace, without circumstances having to change. This I discovered myself when the Lord led me along difficult paths.

Thank You, Je - sus, that at Christ-mas
You de - sire to come to me,
Free - ing me from fear and an - guish
As my Lord and Prince of Peace.

In my inmost heart, O Jesus,
You are keeping watch, I know,
Letting in naught that would harm me
Or arouse fear in my soul.

Since on earth in night and darkness
You endured fear willingly,
You can tell us what will help us, 
And bring peace in time of need.

You alone, Lord, hold the sceptre 
As the mighty Prince of Peace,
And You have the power to order
Fear and anxiousness to yield.

Little Jesus, how I thank You, 
For You truly come to me!
I will trust You and not waver
Whene'er fear oppresses me.



What a tremendous offer! At Christmas we may draw near to the manger and worship the Child, whose name is PRINCE OF PEACE. Being the very essence of love, how can Jesus withhold from us His peace in these fear-ridden times when we especially long for security? Will He not keep His word?

MY PEACE I GIVE TO YOU

John 14:27

By the power of Jesus' redemption, we can become peacemakers, reflecting His love. But because so few are willing to walk in the way of peace, there is still no lasting, total peace in our sinful world. Peace between the nations is possible only when enough people are living according to God's commandments and turning daily from sin in repentance.

Such a group of people is now emerging. They belong to the Prince of Peace and reflect something of Jesus' nature – His humility, love and meekness. They are His faithful ones. During the sufferings of the end times they will grow to spiritual maturity and learn to overcome, for



those who can be at peace while enduring suffering and dangers, fears and persecution, have won the victory. They have seen for themselves that Jesus is greater than suffering and hardship and that nothing can separate them from Him (Romans 8:38-39).

We are preparing to meet the coming Prince of Peace. So let us worship Him here and now as the Prince of Peace. He will accomplish His eternal purposes for humanity through judgment, and establish His kingdom of peace. When that time comes, swords will be beaten into ploughshares and nation will not lift up sword against nation (Isaiah 2:4) and all the world will be filled with the glory of the Lord.



Photos: Frescoes in the Angel's Chapel in the Franciscan Shepherds' Field, Bethlehem.

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*) www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/Infoservice/Presse/Meldungen/2011/110106-VN-SR.html

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