

The Peaceful Kingdom

Key Verse: *“They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.”*
—Isaiah 11:9

Selected Scripture:
Isaiah 11:1-9

THE PEACEFUL KINGDOM.

The Golden Age. The Millennium. These names have been used in reference to the beautiful vision of our Key Verse—God’s kingdom on earth. In Scripture, a “mountain” often symbolizes a kingdom. Imagine a worldwide kingdom where no one seeks to hurt anyone else and the destructive forces unleashed by human conflict are extinct. Imagine a world in which all mankind are fully enlightened by the knowledge of the Lord, and where love, wisdom, and justice guide every motive and action.

Obviously, such peace and enlightenment are not what we see in the world today. Competing ideologies—religious, political, social, and economic—trigger perilous conflict the world over. Reports of factions hurting and destroying each other are a staple of the daily news. There is no common agreement on what values should govern society. There is no consensus on who God really is, what his standards are, or if he even exists. All these conditions grieve those who love God and his righteousness. They continue to pray, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” (Matt. 6:10) This prayer, taught to us by Jesus, is fitting in that he is the one of whom Isaiah testifies who will bring lasting peace

and righteousness to the earth. He will establish God's kingdom, and assure that his will shall be done "in earth."

Jesus' resume is impressive. "The spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. And he will delight in the fear of the LORD, And He will not judge by what His eyes see, Nor make a decision by what His ears hear; But with righteousness He will judge the poor, And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked."—Isa. 11:2-4, *New American Standard Bible*

When Jesus judges the earth in righteousness, it is not an occasion for dread or fear. His judging will not be as a criminal case, in which we are the "defendant," but as a civil case, in which we are the "plaintiff"—seeking deliverance. His rule over earth is not for the purpose of hurting, destroying, or oppressing. It is to bring peace and liberty. Jesus' noble character is above reproach. In the peaceable kingdom, his words will be irresistible and powerful. They will "strike the earth"—that is, society—causing real change for the betterment and blessing of all. His words will cause mankind to repent, and cease from evil. In this sense, the wicked will be "slain" in that they leave behind sinful ways and no longer practice evil.

"For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. 2:9-11, *NASB*) As consecrated believers, we presently have a ministry of reconciliation to the world. Therefore, let us not hurt nor destroy others by our words and actions. Rather, let them be in harmony with the coming kingdom on earth. ■