

# The Light of Peace

Luke 2:14

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***"Peace arrives because a person arrives."***

## **Introduction.**

Our universal and diverse longing for peace.

### **1. Peace Comes from Above.**

- a. The address of peace is different from the source of peace.
- b. App: Nothing in this world can produce peace.

### **2. Peace is Shalom.**

- a. Peace in English: Comfort, absence of trouble, calm.
- b. Peace in Hebrew: Completeness, wholesomeness.
- c. App: Redeemed relationship with God, neighbour, creation, the self.

### **3. Peace is Relational.**

- a. Universalism vs Relational peace.
- b. App: Receiving Jesus, you receive peace.

### **4. Peace is the Absence of Hostility.**

- a. Brazil is a "peaceful" country.
- b. Pax Romana.
- c. App: The borders of heaven are at peace with us.

## **Conclusion.**

Summary

Illustration of the firefighter.

Illustration of the kid.

***"Peace arrives because a person arrives."***

As we light the candle of hope in this Advent season, you are probably aware of a man in the south (Trump) who wants so badly “his” Nobel Peace Prize for stopping the wars (that might be selfish, or genuine, let’s kindly give him the benefit of the doubt). Those watching the wars on the TV, want peace. Above all, the people who are involved and suffering with the war, they want peace the most.

Whether for:

- Selfish ambition
- Empathy
- Suffering

Everyone wants peace. It is a human need.

That’s what this sermon is all about: I am not naïve, I cannot tell everything about peace in one sermon, that’s impossible. However, this Advent verse of Luke 2:14 has a lot to teach about peace – and its main lesson is actually the theme of this sermon: “Peace arrives when a person arrives.” Peace is found in the person of Christ.

*“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to those whom his favor rests.”*

(Luke 2:14)

## **1. Peace comes from above.**

People get confused with this: you feel peace in your heart, and that makes you to think that peace comes from within. However, that’s just the address of your emotions, that’s not the source of peace.

That’s why people try to buy stuff, go to yoga, accomplish dreams... They want to feel peace within, but the source of peace is from above.

“Glory to God in the highest” the text says. Peace comes from above; it is God’s grace that provides you peace. The human heart will never be able to produce peace by itself; outward things or accomplishment will never do it either; only God can give peace to your heart – and he does that by giving you his Son, Jesus Christ.

## **2. Peace is Shalom.**

On that note, it’s important to see the different understanding of the word “peace” between the English and the Hebrew dictionaries.

- For the English-speaking people – that includes you and me – the word peace means “comfort,” “absence of stress,” “relaxed/calm mind.”
- For the Hebrew-speaking people – the ones who wrote the Bible – the word peace (Shalom) means “completeness,” “wholesomeness.”

Do you see the difference? In our society, peace has an emotional approach. In the Bible, peace has a whole different meaning.

Straightforward: from the Biblical perspective, Shalom (peace) equals to completeness. That means that all the areas of your life are in harmony:

- Your relationship with God.
- Your relationship with your neighbour.
- Your relationship with God's creation.
- Your relationship with yourself.

### **3. Peace is relational.**

The contrast between the English understanding of peace to the biblical one (Shalom), leads you to the second half of this verse, "peace *to men* on whom his favor rests." Peace to men means that peace is relational.

There are two ways you could understand this verse – the wrong way or the right way.

- The wrong way: "Universalism."

What's Universalism? It is the belief that every human being will be saved no matter what. People who believe in Universalism approaches this verse as if it was a one-sided relationship – God is giving peace to every human "deliberately" and "recklessly."

With such belief, comes a wrong path, and you can see it in some common statements: "every religion leads to God;" "I can do whatever I want with *my* life;" "there is no right or wrong, you do whatever makes you happy..."

- The right way: "Relationship."

The understanding that those who receive the King Jesus, they will receive peace – because peace is relational. Moreover, peace is ultimately attached to Jesus himself. Just as it was mentioned in the beginning, "peace arrives when a person (Jesus) arrives."

Luke chapters 1 and 2, make things clear: the angels announced the birth of Christ to Joseph and Mary, then to these humble shepherd men, lastly, at the end of chapter 2, the good news of Jesus' birth was announced to the elderly Simeon and Anna. They all believed in Jesus, and they were counted as blessed for doing so, they received peace! (Not to mention the Magi from the East, who traveled the world to see Jesus, and they received peace!)

Peace is relational, and *ultimately*, peace is a person: Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

#### **4. Peace is the absence of hostility.**

The verse ends with the subject of “good will” towards human kind – this has a deep meaning, God is not talking about “Grace,” he is talking about something else. Let me illustrate this one:

I am from Brazil and in my country, we live in consistent danger – we avoid using jewelry, our houses have high walls, we avoid walking on the streets in the evening ... Brazil is dangerous! However, Brazil is considered a *peaceful* country (can you believe that?!) because its borders are always safe – Brazil never goes to war.

In a similar sense, God is telling humanity – even though you have been afflicted by sin, and things don’t look good down on Earth – God has chosen to make his borders a safe haven for humanity. Heaven does not want to make war; heaven wants to make peace with people. There is salvation if people believe in Jesus Christ.

Moreover, a deeper look into the context of Jesus’ days, and you will find about a famous law called “Pax Romana” (Rome’s peace). Rome made peace available to every person within the Empire – whether people were citizens or not, to everybody was promised peace.

However, there was a caveat to the Pax Romana – the means for peace used by Rome was the sword (threat):

- There was peace *only* if people did everything Rome demands (search history books and you will quickly learn that the soldiers and people in power were not nice people!).
- There was the sword if you did not do everything the Romans tell you to do.

Heaven provides a better peace and better terms for you. Peace has a name; his name is Jesus. Believe in him and have a personal relationship with him, you will have peace.

#### **Conclusion.**

In summary: Peace is a person, not a thing. Peace comes from above, not from within. Peace is not an emotion, peace is Shalom – relational peace – your life is well with God, your neighbour, God’s creation, and with yourself. Peace means that instead of choosing to make war, God has chosen to make peace with you and he did so by sending his Son Jesus Christ to give his life and raise from the dead for you.

*“Peace arrives when a person arrives.”*