

“THE FUTURE” SERMON SERIES

SERMON # 9

No More Bombs Bursting in Air

I Thessalonians 5:1-4 and Micah 4:1-5

AS PREACHED BY

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We come to the conclusion of this series of sermons on **The Future** and how fitting it is that we also embark on a new year. But tragically, halfway around the world, many American men and women are involved in war in the Middle East, and the fact of the matter is, terrorism must be constantly on the minds of all Americans.

Daily we are hearing the cries of those who insist our soldiers must be brought home immediately -- reminding me at least of those same calls that we all heard during the Viet Nam War. It seems **September 11th** has sadly been forgotten by so many...forgotten that day when our nation was attacked by religious zealots thinking they were doing the work of their *god* in destroying the lives of innocent westerners.

I want to remind you that freedom has never been free. It has been purchased with blood...blood of men and women who stood up to defend their nation and others who were threatened by despots and tyrants. Don't you ever forget that liberty has always come through the overthrow of tyrants. Sadly, wars have also literally drenched battlefields with blood throughout our history in order to gain the freedoms we now enjoy.

Wars have been fought *to end all wars*, but still the world is an armed camp and a very dangerous place to live. Someone once said this old world was such a dangerous place in which to live that no one would get out alive.

You remember the words of our Lord as recorded in Matthew 24:6-7 -- ***“And you will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars; see that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes.”*** These things are going to continue right on until our Lord's return, but we shouldn't allow all of these things to shake our faith -- rather, they should build our faith for our Lord forewarned us of all that is taking place around us right now.

Mankind has searched -- and continues searching for that ever illusive peace -- and yet we are promised the day of peace is coming. If that is truly the case, then it is fair for us to ask -- when will the world find peace? It is obvious mankind cannot bring it, regardless of their best intentions. Armaments and machinery of war cannot bring peace, and treaties cannot bring peace. Man can do all that is within his power and still fall short of attaining their goal of world peace.

PEACE IS THE CRY OF THE EARTH TODAY

Notice very carefully the words of I Thessalonians 5:1-4 -- ***“Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, Peace and safety! then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief.”***

Please allow me once again to remind you that the coming of the Lord Jesus will ***“be as a thief”*** only in that it will be unexpected -- not because our Lord Jesus is so weak that He has to *sneak* in and slip His people out. When He returns, every eye is going to see Him (Matthew 24:27). Does that really sound like a *secret coming* or a secret rapture? ***I don't think so!***

Throughout the centuries, people have longed for peace. But war has continued to plague the earth. It has seemed at times that peace was surely within our grasp -- that the horrors of war would keep the world from ever repeating the damage and destruction that war brings. Yet, we know there has never been a time of peace. Is there any wonder the cry for peace has continued as the weapons of war have become more and more *sophisticated*? Nations have cried out for peace, all of the time seeking to intensify their arsenals of war.

Why in the world do wars continue? Again, the Bible gives us the answer for James, the half-brother of our Lord wrote, ***“What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. And you are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures. You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God”*** (James 4:1-4).

The lust of power has driven not the despots of yesterday...but of today as well. They literally lust for power and property. They want to control the wealth and the people as well.

Peace will finally seem within the grasp of mankind. People will believe that peace and safety has finally arrived when the antichrist assumes his position and unites the world behind him and his reign.

I was never able to fully understand how any one man could unite the world because of all of the different kinds of governments we have around the world. We have seen that people reared under communism have a very difficult time accepting **personal** responsibility for **themselves**. For generations they were provided for, albeit in poverty and bondage. Yet, during the Clinton debacle, I heard so many people say, "*But the economy is good.*" I realized then that people don't care who is their president, their king, or whatever -- just as long as they are happy and comfortable. Mankind has desired peace and security -- and if the antichrist provides it, they will gladly accept him and follow him. But even then, destruction will be on its way.

As Christians, we must be on the alert to the signs of Christ's return. As I have repeatedly told you, there is absolutely no reason under the sun for anyone to be caught off guard by the events taking place around the world right now! Our Bibles spell out the signs of the second coming and of the end of the age in minute detail. And I want to tell you this, these are days to watch and pray -- they are days to seek to rescue the perishing and to care for the dying.

I am convinced that what we are going to do for the Lord, we had better get busy doing! So many of us *plan* to do various things -- witness to others, reach out arms of love to the unloved, invite and bring others to church, but we are going to wait until it is more convenient. Do we really have time to wait -- time to waste on all of our excuses?

PEACE IS COMING ON THE EARTH SOMEDAY

Notice the words of Micah 4:1-5 -- "***And it will come about in the last days that the mountain of the house of the Lord will be established as the chief of the mountains. It will be raised above the hills, and the peoples will stream to it. And many nations will come and say, Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord and to the house of the God of Jacob, that He may teach us about His ways and that we may walk in His paths. For from Zion will go forth the law, even the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He will judge between many peoples, and render decisions for mighty, distant nations. Then they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nations will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they train for war. And each of them will sit under his vine and under his fig tree, with no one to make them afraid, for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken. Though all the peoples walk each in the name of his god, as for us, we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever.***"

Here we have a picture of the Millennial Kingdom when Christ Jesus will rule and reign on this earth. Satan has been bound and thus, there will be no temptation to sin. As

we saw in verse 1, this will be a time of religious peace and in verse 2, it is also a time of political peace. Jesus Christ Himself will rule and reign -- along with His children, the saints.

Isaiah tells us the Millennial Reign or Kingdom will be a time of peace through justice. Notice 11:1-5 -- ***“Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. And 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. Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, and faithfulness the belt about His waist.”***

Isaiah goes on to tell us it is going to be a time of peace in nature. ***“And the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little boy will lead them. Also the cow and the bear will graze; their young will lie down together; and the lion will eat straw like the ox. And the nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child will put his hand on the viper’s den”*** (11:6-8) Then in chapter 35 and the first two verses adds to this picture -- ***“The wilderness and the desert will be glad, and the Arabah will rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it will blossom profusely and rejoice with rejoicing and shout of joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They will see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God.”***

The enmity that has existed between even the animals will end, and the enmity between people and animals will also end. The entire earth will produce abundantly, just as it did in the Garden of Eden for our foreparents. Think about that -- all that we know today is going to pass away! We have lived our entire lives -- as have all of those before us from the time our foreparents sinned in the Garden of Eden -- under the curse of sin and it has touched every single part of God’s creation. The most joyous times we know pale because of the curse of sin. The most beautiful scenes we can behold are laid to waste because of the curse of sin. One day everything will be restored to God’s original intention! What a glorious day that will be and for the Christians, there will be no end to it. At the end of the Millennial Kingdom, the wicked will be judged and turned into hell and the righteous will be rewarded and live forever with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

This will be a time when violence will come to an end as we saw in Isaiah 11:9. Let’s look again at those blessed words -- ***“They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord and the waters cover the sea.”***

In spite of the fact violence has been with us and a part of our daily lives since the fall of Adam and Eve in that Garden of Eden so long ago, it will come to an end and there will be no hurting or destroying in the coming time of peace.

PEACE WILL COME WHEN THE KING COMES

“And He will judge between many peoples and render decisions for mighty, distant nations. Then they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they train for war. And each of them will sit under his vine and under his fig tree, with no one to make them afraid, for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken” (Micah 4:3-4).

Throughout the centuries, men have made peace agreements that have only failed and folks, they will continue to do so until the Prince of Peace comes. Notice the words of Isaiah 9:6-7 -- ***“For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.”***

Christ Himself will judge among all of the people who have ever lived on this earth. I want you to remember that while the saints will both live and reign with the Lord during the Millennial Kingdom, never does He abdicate His position of judge. Shouldn't that tell us something? By what right do we seek to usurp His position? Didn't He warn us in Matthew 7:1-2 -- ***“Do not judge lest you be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.”***

While Christ will both rebuke and sentence the wicked, He will bring fairness to all in His judgment.

And glory to God, He will end all war. The very weapons will be put to better use. Folks, there will be **No More Bombs Bursting in Air!**

While we rejoice in the assurance, the day is coming when this earth will finally live in peace, we can have that peace with God right now by faith. Paul tells us, ***“Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”*** (Romans 5:1). That personal peace comes when we fully surrender to Christ Jesus as Paul tells us in Philippians 4:6-8 -- ***“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever***

is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.”

Surely there are dark days ahead for mankind -- but folks, look up -- look just beyond the present and see that our Lord Jesus is coming again, and He is coming to restore all things to Himself. Are we truly ready for that return?