

**“The Fruit of Righteousness Will be Peace”**  
(Isaiah 32)(10.16.22)

Isaiah 32 (NIV84) *The Kingdom of Righteousness*

**32** See, a king will reign in righteousness  
and rulers will rule with justice.

<sup>2</sup> Each man will be like a shelter from the wind  
and a refuge from the storm,  
like streams of water in the desert  
and the shadow of a great rock in a thirsty land.

<sup>3</sup> Then the eyes of those who see will no longer  
be closed,  
and the ears of those who hear will listen.

<sup>4</sup> The mind of the rash will know and understand,  
and the stammering tongue will be fluent and  
clear.

<sup>5</sup> No longer will the fool be called noble  
nor the scoundrel be highly respected.

<sup>6</sup> For the fool speaks folly,  
his mind is busy with evil:

He practices ungodliness  
and spreads error concerning the Lord;  
the hungry he leaves empty  
and from the thirsty he withholds water.

<sup>7</sup> The scoundrel's methods are wicked,  
he makes up evil schemes  
to destroy the poor with lies,  
even when the plea of the needy is just.

<sup>8</sup> But the noble man makes noble plans,  
and by noble deeds he stands.

<sup>9</sup> You women who are so complacent,  
rise up and listen to me;  
you daughters who feel secure,  
hear what I have to say!

<sup>10</sup> In little more than a year  
you who feel secure will tremble;  
the grape harvest will fail,  
and the harvest of fruit will not come.

<sup>11</sup> Tremble, you complacent women;  
shudder, you daughters who feel secure!  
Strip off your clothes,  
put sackcloth around your waists.

<sup>12</sup> Beat your breasts for the pleasant fields,  
for the fruitful vines

<sup>13</sup> and for the land of my people,  
a land overgrown with thorns and briars—  
yes, mourn for all houses of merriment  
and for this city of revelry.

<sup>14</sup> The fortress will be abandoned,  
the noisy city deserted;  
citadel and watchtower will become a wasteland  
forever,

the delight of donkeys, a pasture for flocks,

<sup>15</sup> till the Spirit is poured upon us from on high,  
and the desert becomes a fertile field,  
and the fertile field seems like a forest.

16 Justice will dwell in the desert  
and righteousness live in the fertile field.

17 The fruit of righteousness will be peace;  
the effect of righteousness will be quietness and  
confidence forever.

18 My people will live in peaceful dwelling places,  
in secure homes,  
in undisturbed places of rest.

19 Though hail flattens the forest  
and the city is leveled completely,

20 how blessed you will be,  
sowing your seed by every stream,  
and letting your cattle and donkeys range free.

**The word of God for the people of God.**

LET US PRAY.

Title: **"The Fruit of Righteousness Will be  
Peace"**

INTRODUCTION:

Imagine if you will a child that is born into a wealthy family. From a fabulously equipped birthing hospital, the child is brought home to a lavish home in a gated community. This child has every advantage in life. No need or perceived need exists that is not satisfied. Whether it be food, comfort, entertainment, healthcare (actually wellcare because no illness comes upon them), education, or edifying experiences, this child is blessed.

They go to the best schools. They travel and see the sights of the world. They are surrounded by friends and family from similar situations. After graduating from the best universities, they marry the man or woman of their dreams that they met in their French Literature Class. And, so they go through life; some would call it a fairytale life.

Is this a life of peace? I didn't describe any conflict. I didn't describe trials or tribulations. But, neither did I describe a relationship with God or Jesus the Son of God. See this child grew to be an adult and had smooth sailing all through life. They never needed anything and hence, never felt a need for God. It all seemed like such silliness anyway, to believe in a supernatural Creator who was sovereign over all things. Many might have thought this person had peace, but I say to you that they had a complacent life. Was it a life of ease or emptiness? Yes.

BODY:

Let us think about it in a different way. This illustration was guided by the Holy Spirit as I drove by the old Conovertown United Methodist Church. Several years ago it was sold by the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church to another church. Out in back of the church is a tall tower. I am not sure if it is a cell tower or just a radio relay tower.

But, it is also a flagpole of gigantic proportions. The flag and the pole can be seen for many miles. I can see it from my neighborhood, but when I drove by it on Friday morning, I could not see the flag. Why? It turns out that it was laying limp on the backside of the pole.

Our 2<sup>nd</sup> verse in this 32<sup>nd</sup> chapter of Isaiah says, "Each man will be like a shelter from the wind and a refuge from the storm." Hurricane Ian is fresh in our memories so it is not hard for us to know the realities of wind and storms of life. It is also metaphorically true. We can experience wind and storms in our relationships. Those in the Ukraine are dealing with extreme winds and storms.

If you are a regular attender here, you have heard this verse before: John 16:33 (NIV84) Jesus declared,

<sup>33</sup>“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

AND likewise in Matthew 6:34 (NIV84)

<sup>34</sup>“Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

That flag could not be seen because there was no wind, no movement in the air. The flag represents our nation, it is our National Ensign. The red, white and blue, with a star for each state, inspires us. Why? Because when we see it, we are reminded of all the blessings we have as citizens of this country. We are reminded about all the high ideals upon which our nation is founded. We are reminded about all the sacrifices that have been made to ensure the freedoms and the pursuit of liberty that we enjoy. Our flag fluttering in the breeze brings to mind a joy and confidence we have from the privileges we have been granted for simply being citizens of this nation.

Here is the thing. As Christians, our citizenship is in heaven. We are ambassadors of peace and ministers of reconciliation here on this earth. When the winds of this world blow against us, we are to show our true colors like the National Ensign. We

represent and point to our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

We too should inspire others to follow Jesus by the way we respond to the trouble and tribulations of this earthly life. The stronger the storm, the greater the opportunity to show the peace beyond human understanding. Philippians 4:7 (NIV84) And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

**So my friends, do not seek a life of ease,  
Seek a life in the breeze.**

So, how do we attain this peace? Let us look more deeply into today's scripture.

As often in Isaiah, we have short-term prophecy and long-term prophecy. In this case, the short-term was one year away. Over many years, Isaiah had repeatedly warned the Kings of Israel and the nation that they needed to repent and turn back to God or they would suffer the wrath of god. If we look just four chapters ahead, we read: Isaiah 36:1–2 (NIV84) In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah's reign, Sennacherib king of Assyria attacked all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them.<sup>2</sup> Then the king of Assyria sent his



field commander with a large army from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem.

When Hezekiah prayed to God, the LORD heard his prayer. Here is a portion of the prayer: Isaiah 37:18–20 (NIV84)

<sup>18</sup>“It is true, O Lord, that the Assyrian kings have laid waste all these peoples and their lands. <sup>19</sup>They have thrown their gods into the fire and destroyed them, for they were not gods but only wood and stone, fashioned by human hands. <sup>20</sup>Now, O Lord our God, deliver us from his hand, so that all kingdoms on earth may know that you alone, O Lord, are God.”

Isaiah 37:36–37 (NIV84)

<sup>36</sup>Then the angel of the Lord went out and put to death a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the Assyrian camp. When the people got up the next morning—there were all the dead bodies! <sup>37</sup>So Sennacherib king of Assyria broke camp and withdrew. He returned to Nineveh and stayed there.

So, Jerusalem was not captured. King Hezekiah remained in place. The nation of Israel received a reprieve. Would they change their ways? Not for long. And, Assyria would overrun Israel and carry off the people into exile from The Promised Land.

The long-term prophecy deals with eschatology, end times. Isaiah speaks about the Messiah and the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom. The Messiah is the king who will reign in righteousness.

Isaiah 16:5 (NIV84)

<sup>5</sup> In love a throne will be established;  
in faithfulness a man will sit on it—  
one from the house of David—  
one who in judging seeks justice  
and speeds the cause of righteousness.

Jeremiah 23:5 (NIV84)

<sup>5</sup> “The days are coming,” declares the Lord,  
“when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch,  
a King who will reign wisely  
and do what is just and right in the land.

Our Old Testament ends with the book of Malachi. We read in Malachi 4:2 (NIV84) “But for you who revere my name, **the sun of righteousness** will rise with healing in its wings. And you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall.” Then the Holy Scriptures are silent for four hundred

years. And of course, our New Testament begins with the birth of Jesus.

Well, what exactly is righteousness anyway? Our time does not allow for an extensive study, but this should help us get the idea. One biblical encyclopedia starts with this:

**“Righteousness.** Conformity to a certain set of expectations, which vary from role to role. Righteousness is fulfillment of the expectations in any relationship, whether with God or other people. It is applicable at all levels of society, and is relevant in every area of life.

Therefore, righteousness denotes the fulfilled expectations in relationships between man and wife, parents and children, fellow citizens, employer and employee, merchant and customers, ruler and citizens, and God and man. Depending on the fulfillment of one’s expectations, an individual could be called righteous and his or her acts and speech could be designated as righteous.

The opposite of righteous is “evil,” “wicked,” or “wrong”. Righteousness is the fiber which holds society, religion, and family together. Righteousness enhances

the welfare of the community. A godly person was called "righteous" and was a person of wisdom, whose "righteousness" brought joy to his family, to his city, and to the people of God."

"Not only is God righteous, revealing his righteousness in his mighty acts, but he also expects righteousness of others, who are to reflect the nature of their Creator. The expected response to God's rule is in the form of righteousness, that is, conformity to his rule and will. In this basic sense, Noah is called "righteous" because he walked with God and showed integrity in comparison to his contemporaries."

The human race has demonstrated that we are unable to meet the divine standards of righteousness on our own merit. Adam and Eve had one rule and couldn't follow it. Every generation since then continues to show that we cannot keep the commandments of God.

Somehow, in our human understanding, we think if we make enough laws, we will have peace in our society. The folly should be obvious. That is why we need a Savior. That is why God the Father sent God the Son. Jesus said in Luke 5:32 (NIV84) "I

have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

The Apostle Paul explains how you and I can become righteous. Philippians 3:7–9 (NIV84)

<sup>7</sup> But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup> What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to **the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord**, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ<sup>9</sup> and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.

Romans 5:17 (NIV84)

<sup>17</sup> For if, by the trespass of the one man [Adam], death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:21 (NIV84)

<sup>21</sup> so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let me remind you of the sermon title as I remind you of our central verse: Isaiah 32:17 (NIV84) The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever. So, let us now look at peace, this fruit of righteousness.

The Lexham Theological Wordbook explains **Peace**: [it] “denotes the wholeness, soundness, and well-being that characterizes God and that [which] God created in the world. As peace was broken due to human sin, such well-being constitutes the hope for ultimate restoration by God. In the biblical writings, peace is the wholeness that comes as **a result of alignment with God’s creative and redemptive purposes.**”

Peace occurs not only in interpersonal relationships, but also in ethnic and political relationships. Peace also carries a cosmic connotation, in which all aspects of creation, both human and non-human, should exist in harmony with each other. Peace is thus the ideal of creation that God’s redemptive activity seeks to restore.”

Ephesians 2:14–17 (NIV84)

<sup>14</sup> For he [Jesus] himself **is our peace**, who has made the two {Jew and Gentile} one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility,  
<sup>15</sup> by abolishing in his flesh the law with its

commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, **thus making peace,**<sup>16</sup> and in this one body **to reconcile both of them to God through the cross,** by which he put to death their hostility.<sup>17</sup> He came and **preached peace** to you who were far away and **peace to those who were near.**

While so much more can be said about peace, I will refer you back to last week's message, "The Dove and the Olive Leaf," which can be seen, heard, and read on our website. Also, a study of the Hebrew word, "shalom," would expand your understanding of peace.

In its simplest form and one short enough to be easily memorized, I say to you that **peace is a sense of well-being that is only possible when we are in a right relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.** It leads to a quietness of the soul and a confidence felt in the heart and mind.

#### CONCLUSION:

Does all this seem somewhat academic? We believe that Jesus is the Son of God. We believe that he paid our penalty and we get His righteousness. We believe that Jesus is Lord of lords and King of kings. And yet...we struggle to bear the fruit of peace in our lives. We want it but rarely see evidence in ourselves or other

Christians. How do we bridge the gap between belief and reality?

The prophet of Isaiah tells us in this 32<sup>nd</sup> chapter that the individuals and the nation of Israel will be under judgment until the Spirit of God is poured down upon us. That has happened at Pentecost when the Church of Jesus Christ was birthed. As men and women of faith, we have God the Holy Spirit living within us. We have Christ's righteousness and peace with our heavenly Father. This is the truth laid out in scripture.

Let us take hold of this truth and the promises. Let us have eyes that see, ears that listen and minds that know and understand. Then let our stammering tongues be fluent and clear. Be deliberate. Be bold. Claim God's promises of righteousness and peace. Yield to the prodding of the Holy Spirit. Immerse yourselves in the word of God. Pursue a prayer-filled life.

Philippians 1:9–11 (NIV84)

<sup>9</sup>And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight,  
<sup>10</sup>so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ,  
<sup>11</sup>filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.



Peace be with you.

Let the people say, **And also with you.**

Amen and amen. Let us pray.