

Give Us Peace

blighted by selfishness, greed, and lust for power.

The realist is frank enough to confess that there can be no brave new world until there are perfect people to live in it. And his argument seems flawless when we consider what the children of darkness have done to our earth in this generation. But, jif it were possible to develop perfect men and women, we would not find complete happiness, for in our present state sickness would plague our existence and all too soon death would call us from our work.

We shall never have Utopia if we wait for man to build it, for all our pomp of yesterday Is one with Nineveh and Tyre.

Humanity has been disappointed with this-sin-cursed earth since the day Adam and Eve, were driven from the Garden of Eden. We shall not be satisfied until we see the city Abraham looked for, "a city which bath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Hebrews 11: 10.

This world shall be restored to its original perfection as the home for man. "Behold, I make all things new," is the promise of our Lord, and to confirm our faith, He said to the prophet John: "Write: for these words are true and faithful." Revelation 21:5.

To this earth, God will bring the New Jerusalem, and it will be the capital of the new civilization. John gives the vivid description of its appearance in these words: I John saw the Holy City, New' Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God." Verses 2,3.

Let us consider the description of this city as it is set forth in the Bible. It is a giant metropolis some fifteen hundred miles in circumference. If we could start out to walk around the wall of the city, by the time we had finished the trip we would have journeyed as far as from New York to Key West, or from Seattle to San Diego.

The city is laid out in a perfect square, with each street running through the city three hundred seventy-five miles long. The twelve foundations are composed of precious stones, much like the colors of the rainbow. The walls, two hundred fifteen feet high, are of transparent jasper, and the streets are pure gold. In the midst of the capital city is the majestic river of life. John describes it by saying: "He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." Revelation 22: 1. The tree of life is there also, and it bears twelve kinds of fruit every month.

THE CITY OF LIGHT

There was a glory in the cities of America and of the Old World when the lights came on again after the dim out and blackout of war. But the lights can never compare with the illumination of the New Jerusalem, for "the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." Revelation 21:23.

This cannot be a perfect world, however, merely because of its magnificence. In the better land there shall be no more curse" no gin, no strife, no war. Revelation 22:3. God, who "makes wars to cease unto the end of the earth," has set. the highest qualifications for citizenship in the new world; He is determined that sin shall not mar His plan a second time. "There shall in nowise enter into it anything that defiles, neither whatsoever works abomination, or makes a lie." Revelation 21:27. The new earth is barred to the fearful, to the unbelieving, and to murderers, idolaters, and liars. Verse 8. God will welcome the people of all nations of the earth who have gained the victory over sin, who have denied self and accepted the love of Jesus Christ, and who have pledged full allegiance to His government. They are welcomed with these words: "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Revelation 22:14. We shall love the Father, and from one Sabbath to another we shall worship before Him. Isaiah 66:23.

Happy the day when the gates of that city are opened, for the heartaches and regrets of this life shall be forgotten, and "the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." "The voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying." Isaiah 65:17, 19. Millions have said good-by in war time, some never to meet again on earth. Telegrams have arrived for mothers and fathers, for wives and children, stating that a gallant soldier or sailor has given his life for his country. But in God's perfect new world parting, with its heartaches, shall never come. "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and

Give Us Peace

there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Revelation 21:4.

HEAVEN IS REAL

No death, no hospitals, no need, for sick benefits or life insurance policies! There will be no institutions for the deaf, the dumb, or the blind. Those who are afflicted with these ailments today will there .be physically strong. "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing." Isaiah 35:5, 6.

This perfect earth will be a livable place, and we shall enjoy creative work and see the fruit of our labor. To the citizens of God's new world the promise is made: "They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of My people, and Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." Isaiah 65:21, 22. Nature, marred by the ravages of sin, will be restored to its original beauty.

There will be peace in the animal kingdom such as we do not dream could exist. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the lamb together; and a little child shall lead them." Isaiah 11:6. The carnivorous animals will no longer prey on the weaker beasts for their food. "The lion shall eat straw like the ox." Verse 7. The marks of sin that disfigure the plant life will be blotted out. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree." Isaiah 55:13. Eden will be restored to the children of God, and they shall have eternity in which to enjoy it.

THE HAVEN OF REFUGE

To the millions of war refugees who have been tossed to and fro, homeless and forsaken, how sweet is the promise of a new world! The Creator says: "My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." Isaiah 32:18. Peace and security - these will 'indeed bring heaven to this earth.

Thank God, there is a perfect world prepared for those who truly desire it! It is the earth re-created and restored to its original glory, with man brought back to the full image of God. To the disheartened the new earth stands as a monument of cheer; to the soldier who has seen the, holocaust of war it is the promise of peace and happiness; to the sick and dying it is the land of health; to the homeless and despised it is the haven of refuge; and to everyone it is the land of new beginnings.

Even as Utopia has been the subject of many volumes of literature expressing the longing of the human heart, so the new world that God has promised is the brightest hope of the Christian. Peace conferences study methods of creating international security; charters are drafted to ensure permanent peace. These are laudable efforts, and we pray that the leaders of government may have wisdom to bring an end to the scourge of death and destruction so that the gospel of Jesus Christ may be proclaimed to all the world. But God has a plan that shall overshadow the grandiose efforts of men. He will create new heavens and a new earth where peace and security shall be eternal.

You and I may have a home in that new world if we desire it with' all our heart. We must take out our citizenship papers now and prepare for the glad day when we shall enter the city of God. But as one writer affirms: "We shall never prepare for a better world until we are tired of this one." Are we homesick, confessing that our hearts are in a better land? We should be planning for that reunion when we shall meet our friends and loved ones who have also been faithful, and in that glad day we shall never part again.

A GLAD REUNION

Leslie Bain, newspaper writer, describes the reunion of a father and his son who has returned from a battle on the high seas: "The two met. For a minute they held each other's hand, and then they embraced. Not a word was spoken between father and son. They clung to each other in wordless misery. The face of the father was heavily lined. The boy was hardly over twenty, and as he stooped to embrace his father there

Give Us Peace

was a feeling of release about him that is impossible to describe. As though out of a nightmare he found his way into the arms of his father -blissful safety for a tired child."

Such a reunion is a little glimpse of what it will mean to be welcomed home by our Savior. The nightmare of sin and its horrors will be forever past, and His invitation will be sweet to our ears: "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matthew 25:34. The Man with a plan will welcome us home. The dreams that have been in His heart from the time when the world was created will be fulfilled as His children come home. In that hour He will see the reward for all that He suffered, and He will be satisfied.

If our hearts cry out, "Give us peace!" we are actually praying for the home that our Lord is preparing. We are longing for the hideous night of sin to end and for the dawn which ushers in the kingdom of God. That home is prepared for you and for me if we are making preparations to receive it. It will be far better than our fondest dreams can imagine, for "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." 1 Corinthians 2:9.

God will create "all things new." Will you allow Him to begin that new creation in your heart? With the psalmist we can pray: "Create in me a clean heart, O God." This means new ideals, pure thoughts,, and a transformed life. God will take us as we now are, sins and evil habits included, and He will transform us into sons of God, fit citizens for His kingdom. Our part is simple. We must come, surrendering our selfish, willful nature, confessing our sins, and accepting the love of Jesus Christ. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9.

"God, give us peace," is the prayer of every man and woman who is hungering for the security and love of the heavenly Father. We can be free from the burdens of sin, filled with hope and courage-if we follow God to complete His plan for our lives. Jesus declares: "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be!" And with the beloved John we will fervently pray, if we are ready for heaven's new order of peace and security: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Revelation 22:12, 20.

"Think what it will mean to this old world when no longer it groans under the curse of sin, when nature is delivered from the bondage of corruption that now holds it in thrall, and Eden's beauties are made manifest again. Think what it will be when thorns and thistles no longer infest the ground, when parasites no more lay waste our crops and destroy the labor of man's hands, when the deadly hiss of the serpent is heard no more amidst the loveliness of earth's glens and glades; when wars are forgotten and bombs cease forever to fall from the blue vault of heaven; when sin, sickness, suffering, and death are gone. When the very hills rejoice, the 'trees clap their hands, and the mountains flow down with salvation; when the whole round earth from center to circumference is bound by gold chains of love and adoration about the feet of God, and clothed in all the transcendent loveliness of Paradise restored." - J. R. Hunter.