

The Advent WREATH



BUFFALO COVENANT
12/5/21

The Advent Wreath: What Does It Tell Us About Christmas? with Pastor Max Frazier

The Bethlehem Candle - The Candle of Peace

O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

Bethlehem lay about 5 miles south and a little east of Jerusalem.

Fields around Bethlehem were favorites for shepherds.

Bethlehem had a rich history.

Place where Jacob buried Rachel.

Became the hometown of Ruth.

Was the birthplace of King David.

After King David, Bethlehem became lost in the shadows of Jerusalem.

Until the birth of Jesus – Luke 2:1-5

THE DEFINITION OF PEACE

“Peace” = “the absence of conflict.”

The world knows little of peace.

Hebrew word is “shalom.”

Good health

Right relationship between individuals

Indicate prosperity, success, fulfillment

Absence of war

The message of the angels – Luke 2:14

“Peace on earth”

The message of Simeon – Luke 2:34-35

“The cause for the falling and rising of many”

What was the correct message?

THE NEED FOR PEACE WITH GOD - WARS WITHIN

Those outside of Jesus Christ are at war with God:

War of pride.

War of ambition.

War of acceptance.

War of independence.

Result is a lack of inner peace.

Peace can only come when there is a surrender to Jesus Christ. (*Romans 5:1*)

There is no truce with God.

“Truce” = “cessation of hostilities momentarily without resolving the problems that initiated the hostilities.”

Need for surrender (*Romans 5:10*)

THE NEED FOR THE PEACE OF GOD - PRESENCE OF ANXIETY AND WORRY

God’s peace gives us an inner peace, a peace within ourselves.

(*Philippians 4:6-7*)

“Peace with God” = “confidence a person now has because of that relationship with a holy God.” (*1 Peter 5:7, Hebrews 4:14-16*)

“And ye, beneath life’s crushing load,
Whose forms are bending low,
“Who toil along the climbing way
With painful steps and slow.
“Look now! For glad and golden hours
Come swiftly on the wing:
“O rest beside the weary road,
And hear the angels sing!”
– Edmund Sears

A CHALLENGE

The angels were not proclaiming that the world would have peace.

But, men on earth could know of His Peace.

That peace would come when they bowed at the cross and received God’s gift
(*John 14:27*)

I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day

“I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet the words repeat,
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

“I thought how, as the day had come,
The belfies of all Christendom
Had rolled along th’ unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

“And in despair I bowed my head:
‘There is no peace on earth,’ I said,
For hate is strong, and mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

“Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
‘God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,
With peace on earth, good will to men.

“Till ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime,
Of peace on earth, good will to men!”
– Henry W. Longfellow, 1863

