

LENT DEVOTIONAL

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LENT DEVOTIONAL APRIL 13, 2025

SCRIPTURE

ZECHARIAH 9:9-12

9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion!
Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!
Lo, your king comes to you;
triumphant and victorious is he,
humble and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
10 He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
and the war horse from Jerusalem;
and the battle bow shall be cut off,
and he shall command peace to the nations;
his dominion shall be from sea to sea,
and from the River to the ends of the earth.

11 As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you,
I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.
12 Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope;
today I declare that I will restore to you double.

DEVOTION

The Rev. Paul James Pfeuffer '12/ '18

One of the questions I asked my congregation during advent was “What symbols do you most associate with peace?” There’s the V Sign, adopted by 1960s anti-war activists, made by holding the index and middle fingers aloft. In Christian circles, there’s the fish associated with Jesus. There are also the dove, the olive branch, and the symbol designed by the 1958 British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament—so ubiquitous that it became known as the peace sign.

Peace is the inescapable subplot echoing thematically across Jesus’ story, as well as the entire metanarrative of scripture—often in the places least expected. For Zechariah, that peace stems from the image of the Divine Warrior, who demilitarizes the nations under his dominion. While many Christians tend to shy away from the image of God-as-warrior, certainly, this is one that even the most uncomfortable of us can get behind, no? The Warrior is making war...on war. The Warrior comes riding not on a warhorse, but on a donkey, a symbol of peace. No more chariots. No more warhorses. No more battle bows. From sea to sea, to the ends of the earth. War never again. Never again war.

Peace can be found in the strangest, the most mysterious of places, and scripture invites us to see peace where there is conflict in the story of Jesus’ death and resurrection. He brings peace in the days and weeks leading up to his death, always the subversive character turning the image of what we expect on its head.

I invite you during this time to look for moments of peace in the war of the everyday, recognizing the presence of Jesus, reminding us to look for him riding in to calm the storm.

PRAYER

Prince of Peace,

Abide with us, remain with us. Even while we live in a war-torn world, we look forward to the day on which conflict shall cease and all that remains is your deep wellspring of peace.

Amen.

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