

## Remembrance Sunday 2019 – Isaiah 2:1-5, ‘Justice & Peace’

**BCP Collect:** God, our refuge and strength,  
bring near the day when wars shall cease  
and poverty and pain shall end,  
that earth may know the peace of heaven  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Bible Reading:** Isaiah 2:1-5 / Matthew 5:1-10

### TALK

#### ROCK/PAPER/SCISSORS

#### Why do that?

- **Great social experiment!**
- In playground, often a way of resolving disputes – we’d argue about something, but couldn’t agree – we could toss a coin, but often didn’t have money, so we’d play this and the winner was ‘right’. It didn’t really fix the argument, but it makes an important point:

To have peace, we need some way of resolving the dispute, some way of judging.

In playground we can get away with a fun game. But for more important things, we need another way. **HOW? ASK, then summarise:**

**Talk it out** – often first and best way of sorting something out, sit down and talk (in Britain – cup of tea!)

**Go to court** – e.g. in India this weekend: very important judgement about a disputed holy site – NOTE evidence, neutrality

**Sadly in our world, 3<sup>rd</sup> option popular – fight.** Strongest person or group or nation wins. On Remembrance Sunday we think of all people who died in wars like this across all the ages – we give thanks for their bravery and think about their families and those who suffered. And we know that some causes were just – 2<sup>nd</sup> World War was fought against something that was truly evil.

But we also know that even when our cause is right, there will still be innocent victims and suffering. **We need a higher standard of justice, a better way of resolving things.**

Our passage reminds us that God is the only true judge, the one person who can bring perfect justice and therefore true peace. And it tells us *how* God does it – God’s rock, paper and scissors:

**GOD’S ROCK v2:** ‘In the last days, the mountain of the Lord’s temple will be established as the highest of the mountains, and all nations will stream to it.’ So the first step that Isaiah the prophet is telling us is this: we need to come to God’s rock, God’s mountain.

So often in our disputes we don’t bring God into it – it’s just us and the person we’re disputing with. But Isaiah’s advice is this – God’s the biggest and the best, his mountain is the highest, *His rock blunts everything else* – go to God’s rock to find true justice.

Then once we’re at God’s rock, we find **GOD’S PAPER:** v3 ‘the law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem’. God’s told us how to live, He’s given us his law, written down in the bible. It shows us the best way to live – to be humble, generous, forgiving, to help others.

If we’re living by God’s paper, *if God’s paper wraps our lives*, there won’t be as much fighting. Most fights and wars involve things like pride, greed, the desire for revenge and retaliation – all the things God’s paper tells us not to do. So if we want to be truly peaceful people, we need God’s paper.

Finally, **GOD’S SCISSORS:** v4: ‘God will judge between the nations, and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up war against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.’

God’s scissors remind us of His just judgements – His scissors cut through all our disputes, they cut down all our arguments. His judgements are always right and allow us to live in peace.

That's why US courts have inscription: 'In God we trust' – reminds us that no matter how good our laws and judgements, God's ways are higher.

So we as human beings have lots of ways of resolving disputes: sometimes we go to court, sometimes we talk it out, and in the playground sometimes we use Rock, Paper, Scissors. And sometimes these things work – but often, they don't, and we end up fighting.

But as we think about peace today, what we've learnt is that to truly live at peace, we need to play the game God's way: God's rock, God's paper, God's scissors.

Our passage finishes with this simple instruction, and may this be our commitment too: 'Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord'. Let God help us, let God show us His way, and then maybe, just *maybe*, we *can* be people of peace. 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.' Amen.

### **BCP – Act of Remembrance**

Let us remember those who, for their country and for us, laid down their lives in the war:

#### **2 MINUTES SILENCE**

They shall not grow old as we that are left grow old.

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun, and in the morning, we will remember them.

#### **We will remember them.**

Ever-living God, we remember those whom you have gathered from the storm of war into the peace of your presence; may that same peace calm our fears, bring justice to all peoples and establish harmony among the nations, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **PRAYERS: RESPONSE – Lord of peace: hear our prayer.**

For nations: We pray for the peace of our world, that swords would become ploughs, that people would work for life and peace, that this world would become more and more the place it was meant to be.

*Moment of quiet for nations at war today... R*

For leaders: We pray for statesmen and rulers, that they may have wisdom to *know*, and courage to *do* what is right. ... We thank you for their service, and pray that you would challenge them, mould them and inspire them to find the true way to reconcile peoples. You say ‘Blessed are the peace-makers’ – may those working for peace indeed be blessed and may their work prosper. *And especially today we pray for our nation as this time of the forthcoming election... R*

For ourselves: We pray for ourselves, that we would also lead lives of peace and service, bringing life to others. Help us too to be peacemakers. **R**

For everyone: Finally we pray for everyone we know. Thank you Jesus that you are the way the truth and the life. Help us to know your truth and love. (PAUSE FOR QUIET to think of someone we want to remember in prayer today.) Help them to know your love too. **R**

## **PEACE:**

Christ is our peace. Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called children of God. Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

## **Final prayer/blessing:**

God grant to the living grace, to the departed rest, to the Church, the Queen, the Commonwealth and all people, unity, peace and concord, and to us and all God’s servants, life everlasting.

And the blessing...