**VOLUME 5; CHAPTER 01 - THE PREACHING OF G. CAMPBELL MORGAN**

**PEACE by G. CAMPBELL MORGAN**

*His name shall be called … Prince of Peace.*

*Isaiah 9:6*

*I came not to send peace, … but a sword.*

*Matthew 10:34*

*The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable.*

*James 3:17*

THAT IS A STARTLING COMBINATION OF TEXTS. THE FIRST IS part of one of the sublimest of Messianic prophecies. It occurs in that great passage of Isaiah in which out of circumstances of tumult and turmoil, of war and strife and perplexity, the prophet foretells the day when all the things of war shall be destroyed; and he bases his hope upon the great fact that a child is born; a son is given. Whatever local meaning there may have been in the words of the prophet; whatever first application there may have been in his own domestic relationships, it is quite certain that he looked through, and saw emerging, amid the mists somewhere - how far I think he could not have told - the figure of One, a great and wonderful Deliverer, Whom he described by the four titles, Wonderful Counsellor, God-hero, Father of eternity, and finally Prince of peace; which titles constitute a key to the interpretation of Scripture, and of all human history so far as that history has been written, either in what we call sacred or profane literature. The complete title gives us an account of the unveiling of God, of the growing understanding of God on the part of man.

He was known first in Creation as the "Wonderful Counsellor," and then of necessity, in human history as the "Mighty God," the God-hero, the God of battles, the warrior God. Then in revealed religion, He was progressively revealed as the "Everlasting Father," or as the margin has it, the Father of eternity. If we take the Hebrew word here, and translate it quite literally we are grievously disappointed. It would then read, the Father of the terminus. Can anything be more disappointing than that? Yet that is that! As another Hebrew word - "everlasting" - means vanishing point; this Hebrew word, not from the same root, and not having exactly the same meaning signifies the terminus; that is, that which is beyond the vanishing point. God is the Father of that. So if the first uttering disappoint, we find that the suggestiveness is vast. The Father of the vanishing point, and of that which is beyond, the terminus. Therefore He is the abiding One both as to time and space. And finally, the "Prince of peace."

If we accept the suggestion, which this morning it is not my purpose to argue, that here a progressive unveiling of God is indicated; then you will notice that there is first the thought of the "Wonderful Counsellor," the One of perfect thought and perfect will, from Whom must come a perfect law. And immediately following it, the "Mighty God," the God-hero, the God of battles, the God of war. And out of that, and following it, the further revelation of the "Father of eternity." And at last, that of the "Prince of peace."

So that if we take the whole of this description, there is here also a recognition of conflict. "I came not to cast peace" - and I adopt that marginal reading very definitely, not "I came not to send it," but I came not to cast it promiscuously, carelessly. There must be the God of battles before there can be the Prince of peace. There must be the coming of the sword ere there can be peace. And yet why? And the answer is postponed for a moment.

The second of these texts is the word of the Prince Himself. The centuries have run their course. Others have also climbed the heights of vision, and have gazed in hope and longing; and men have again, and yet again, been encouraged as the dreamers have told of lights upon the eastern sky, and have sung to them some refrain caught in high moments of meditation; and all the songs have been those of a coming One. At last we stand by the side of the One long looked for; and what this prophet said of Him long before is true; "when we see Him there is no beauty that we should desire Him." The Prince of peace is now speaking to His messengers as He prepares them for their work; and as He is sending them forth to proclaim the Kingdom He is warning them of the fact that they will have to do their work in the presence of, and in spite of persecution. "Think not that I came to cast peace on the earth: I came not to cast peace, but a sword!" That text is meaningless and valueless, and may be misinterpreted immediately unless we keep it in relation to its context. Where does the subject really begin? In the previous chapter, with Matthew's declaration that when Jesus went through all the cities and villages He saw the multitudes, and He was moved with compassion, because He saw them as sheep scattered, harried by wolves, without a shepherd. Out of that compassion comes the rule of the sword; and if you will take time to look at the context you will see that from that declaration of the moving of His heart with compassion in the presence of what He saw, the story moves right on to my text. It is continuous! The text belongs to that. He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion. He said to His disciples, Go ye, and then He began to instruct them as they went. He said, You will go as sheep in the midst of wolves. It is not going to be easy work, this work I bring to you. What is the work? To bring peace. The multitudes are harried by wolves, scattered, spoiled, harmed; therefore, I must fight! What for? To bring peace to the multitudes. The passion for peace creates the necessity for the sword.

The third text is the word of the most practical of the New Testament writers, and if you will take all the context here in this letter of James you will see that he is protesting against conflict amongst the brethren of the Prince. Brother of the Prince Himself, according to the flesh, he writes to those scattered by the dispersion, and speaks to them again and again as "My brethren," "My brethren," "My brethren." I am constrained to wait a moment here, because there is light upon that thought which is of value to us. There was a day when Jesus was in the midst of His work, and His mother and His brethren - this man amongst them in all probability - took a long journey as far as from Nazareth to Capernaum, to find Him, and to persuade Him to give up His work, because He was over-wearying Himself. Jesus was in the house, with a handful of disciples, and He then inquired "Who is My mother? and who are My brethren ... For whosoever shall do the will of My Father which is in heaven, he is My brother, and sister, and mother." A great deal has happened since then. His brother has become His brother in a new sense, because he is doing the will of His Father. And it is very significant to me, that when he writes, this brother of the Lord after the flesh, he says to those to whom he writes, "My brethren." He is protesting against conflict amongst them, faction and strife among the brethren of the Lord. How will it be cured? In these circumstances, which are very local, and for the correction of conditions which do not universally obtain among the saints of God, there flames out a principle of interpretation, which helps me in an understanding of all the things of difficulty which have oppressed me as I have read the prophecies of the coming of the Prince of peace, and then heard this self-same Prince of peace say, "I came not to cast peace, but a sword."

Think of the history of the centuries, the nineteen centuries of the Christian era or dispensation. Look back for a moment to the Person with Whom we are so familiar now, the Person of this Lord Jesus Christ of ours. Remember that He is the One to Whom all the prophets give witness; the Prince of peace for Whom men had been waiting, and for Whose coming they had been longing. Remember this also, even though it but increase the perplexity of the situation, that before He went away He said to a little group of His disciples, "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." Remembering all these things, then look at Him, and if there is one matter that impresses the mind more than another as you watch this man Jesus, from the moment when His public ministry began, to the close of that ministry, it is that of the restlessness of the life of this Lord of peace. I know you are in revolt against that statement because you are in sympathy with the underlying riches of His quietness. All that is true. I am speaking now of the external things. No home! Oh my masters, did you ever think of it? Oh, the tragedy of it! We recite it carelessly, or with merely sentimental sympathy, but listen to it, and at this Christmastide try to understand it: "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." Homeless! Friendless! Do you challenge me? Well, then I shall ask your definition of a friend, and I will give you one from inspiration, and this is it. "A friend loveth at all times, And a brother is born for adversity."

Test the friends of Jesus by that, and He had not one. When the darkness gathered, and the tempest swept, He was left alone. There are some passages in this New Testament that to my own heart are passages which flame with fire. "They all" - they, that little group of disciples, whom He in grace called friends only by virtue of what He would make them presently, "they all forsook Him and fled." No, I am not angry with them. I admire them for staying so long. I am such a coward myself that I should have gone long before they did. But the fact, consider it, wherever He went, unrest; no place to lay His head; no friend. He tried to tell them of His Cross, but they never understood it until after His resurrection. All about Him were the men of light and leading, planning and plotting to catch Him in His talk, to entrap Him, He was a storm-center from the beginning of his ministry to its close. No peace.

Then look at the story of His first disciples, and the appalling thing is that when you begin now to look at the inner circle, strife is discovered amongst them. Oh, that dreadful picture of the New Testament of those last days, in which there was strife amongst them, as to which of them should be the greatest, repeated as you read the story, until you are weary of it. Conflict!

And then we come outside, and look generally through the centuries; and we look abroad today; where is peace? In the Church? Would God it were, but it is not. Brethren are divided, fighting; wasting the energies of their spiritual life which ought to be devoted to the warfare against the devil; hindering one another. Do you admire the divisions of Christendom? Then so do not I. Do you care to argue that all these things are willed by Him Who prayed that we all might be one? The divided condition of the Christian Church is a shame and a disgrace. Where is peace?

And my brethren, if I lift my eyes and look outside, if I look at the world, where is peace? If I look at that section of the world over which, sooner or later during these centuries, the messengers of the Cross have passed, that section of the world which is spoken of as Christian, or Christianized, where is peace? Well, I need say very little. I do not know, and I do not ask, and I care absolutely nothing for your particular convictions as to national politics, but I ask you to look from the height of your Christian experience at the world. We talk about peace. We thank God in speeches from the throne and elsewhere that there is peace, but is there peace?

To take that first text, "His name shall be called ... Prince of peace" is to be faced by apparent contradiction. Nineteen centuries, well nigh two millenniums have run their course, and where is peace?

But to take the second text, "I came not to cast peace, but a sword" is to find a description of all that we have seen, but it seems to contradict the idea that He is the Prince of peace.

To take the third is to find the explanation, and to deny both the apparent contradictions.

Mark then I pray you, how these three texts are a revelation, and in order that we may profit by the revelation let us understand its method.

The first text is the announcement of ultimate purpose. He is the Prince of peace. This one Book of Isaiah, is the Book of the Servant of God, Whose mission is one. What is that mission? To establish peace. How does He do it? By the way of judgment; and the first division of the prophecy describes the peace resulting from judgment. In that second division; first, the purpose is declared; secondly, the Prince is presented; and finally, the program is announced. If I were to write one word across the prophecy of Isaiah, a word that catches the underlying motive, what would it be? Peace, God's great purpose of peace. He is the Prince of peace.

When the Prince came, He described the process toward the peace as being the way of the sword. Jesus did not come to sing a lullaby to humanity, and to tell it that its sin does not matter, and its wickedness is nothing, that presently it will all be forgotten. He came in the name of God and eternity to declare war upon all the things that prevent peace. The sword is necessary in the interests of peace.

The third of these texts reveals for us the underlying principle. "First pure, then peaceable."

In the few moments that remain to us, let us make some applications of the teaching; first, in individual life; secondly, in social life; thirdly, in national life; finally, in international matters.

He is the Prince of peace. Think of individual life today. Was it ever more restless than it is now? What are the causes of unrest in individual life? Now I pray you, shut out of view, if it be possible to you for the moment, all other people than yourself. Think of the individual, think of the restlessness of individual life. What are the causes of unrest? Sin. And if the word is not understood outside, I think it is understood here, even if it is a word you are not inclined to make use of. Sir Oliver Lodge says the intelligent man does not speak of sin today. I deny it absolutely. The intelligent man speaks of every fact, it is ignorance that declines to look facts in the face. We may differ as to the interpretation of what is the underlying cause of the unrest; but the Bible teaches that it is lack of God. I take any individual life you please, and where there is no recognition of God, no practical everyday, actual, positive traffic with God or commerce with eternity, then you have a life hot, restless, feverish. And by way of contrast, find me the life of the man, or the woman, or the little child, who knows God; and I will find you a life of quietness and peace, in spite of all the circumstances of stress and strain and conflict. Oh, do we not know them! How they help us, the quiet saints of the most high God, many of them devoid of all the things that minister to man's supposed well-being, but whose hearts are firm and steady and quiet, until it may be said of them, "He that believeth shall not make haste." All the restlessness of individual life today is due to man's lack of God.

What is the way of peace? First pure. And what is purity of heart? It is the heart undivided in its allegiance to God. So this Prince of peace comes. He will come this morning. He is coming this morning. He comes into the pulpit, for this Prince of peace does not divide between the pulpit and the pew. He comes to say, I have brought a sword, and I have come to war against the things in your life that shut God out. This Prince of peace is first the warrior with flaming sword and flashing eyes, and the tremendous word of the ancient prophecy upon His lips, "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." Jesus Christ does not come first with a song and a lullaby and a narcotic. He comes with a sword and a flame and a fire; and there are men and women feeling this, here and now. You know that He will not make peace with the evil thing within you. "First pure." And there are men and women who will yield to Him, and hand over to Him their sword of rebellion, and let Him destroy as with burning the habiliments of their warfare; and to such men and to such women He will bring the peace of God which passeth all understanding.

And He is the Prince of peace socially. What are the causes of unrest in the social world? Take the word of the inquiry in its most general sense; there is social unrest, and we all know we are all talking about it and arguing about it; and all that may be perfectly proper; but what are the causes of it? Caste, and injustice, the failure of men to recognize the absolute oneness of human nature. And so class is set against class, and the dividing lines are being emphasized. Oh the peril of it. And there is injustice in many ways, not only the injustice on the part of those who hold power, but the injustice of misrepresentation on the part of those who lack power; and the injustice as between two men in conflict is that neither of the two will see the standpoint of the other. There are caste differences and injustices.

Or, if you look at the business world, self-seeking is the inspiration of commercial activity, and a vast amount of dishonesty, which has been rechristened business sharpness.

Or, if you look at the Church of God, love of power, and lack of love are the causes of unrest.

What is the way of peace? The Prince comes, first pure; He brings a sword. He is against everything that emphasizes class. He will not enlist as under His banner, even the man who names His name if he bring into the spirit of his conflict that which is against the Spirit of the Lord Himself. He demands that there shall be recognition on the part of all men of the first fundamental necessity of manhood's relationship to God; and then consequently, the great issues and results, of man's true relationship to his brother man. He still comes, and it is not a song merely, it is thunder, saying to men, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God … thou shalt love they neighbour as thyself." On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets; and He is at war with everything in social life that contradicts the individual right of every man to a relationship with God; and the individual responsibility of every man concerning his brother. He is at war with all the forces of unrest.

Or, if you make a further application, what are the causes of national unrest? And I am not lifting my eyes to gaze any further than the shores of my own land. What are the causes of our own national unrest? Are they two, or is it but one? I leave you to decide. Perhaps one, but it must be stated in two ways. Forgetfulness of God and that which is the result - the enthronement of Mammon. Forgetfulness of God! I wonder if we shall soon hear again in our Houses of Parliament, a man who dare quote his Bible, and do it accurately; and do it, not at the bidding of a party, but at the bidding of God Almighty. I wonder! We have forgotten God. We must not say - as we were told recently - too much about the Congo, lest we disturb the balance of power somewhere. Away with the base thing! Where is God? We have forgotten Him, we are putting Him out of count. If a man says these things, somebody will say he is political. I avow in the presence of God, Whose I am, and Whom I serve, I have nothing to do with the mere paltry tricks of party politicians. I have everything to do with the land I love, with its lack of peace and its restlessness, and I affirm it is because we have forgotten God. Our empty churches, our broken-down family altars, our neglected Bibles, these are the things that matter. And my brethren, the Christ of God is at war with all these disturbing forces. It is the sword that He brings. He has not come this Christmas time to sing a national lullaby. He has come again anew, to declare war against the men who forget God, and against the men who enthrone Mammon in His place. Mammon! Oh what eyes had this Man of Nazareth, what far-seeing vision, what clear and accurate understanding of the constructive and destructive forces of the ages. Listen, You cannot serve God and the devil? Oh no, He did not say that. That is what I should have said. I must have my antithesis perfectly balanced. This is what He said, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon," for He knew the devil also, and knew that the devil hides himself behind Mammon, behind its gaudiness and its glitter and its ministry to sensuality. The devil keeps out of sight today, he hides behind Mammon. I have said before on one occasion, I fear the thing was printed, but I will say it again, I have stood in amazement in the presence of Watts' great picture of Mammon. You look at it some day; and yet - my apology to his memory - had I to paint Mammon, I should have painted it otherwise, not bloated, satiated, and sensual, but as gaunt and hungry and never satisfied. That is Mammon. Why is wrong forever on the throne? Ask that question when next righteousness is defeated in any locality, or in the nation, why? And the answer will be, Mammon. When a nation forgets God, it always enthrones Mammon.

And so this Prince of peace is against the forces that cause unrest, and that in the interests of peace.

One other word, for even if so far I have only looked at one's own land, if a man be a Christian man, he cannot forget that he belongs to the world. If a man be a Christian man, he has come to a recognition of the unity of the race. And so one other glance, the international unrest, what are the causes of it? I had almost said, and I am perfectly sure you would have been in revolt against if I had said it so bluntly, that the cause of unrest is patriotism. I will qualify my word, - false patriotism, the patriotism that consents, out of a narrow attitude of mind, to use the word foreigner. Is there a more terrible word in existence than the word foreigner? I do not think there is to a Christian man. Foreigner! The patriotism that says, so long as this land, and this country is maintained in peace and prosperity, then it matters nothing what others go down in the struggle; is false, it is of hell!

And the consequent unfairness that grows from it, and avarice of which it becomes the expression. Would you have an illustration? I will give you one. The fact that at this hour, a paper, standing supposedly for Conservatism - a great word - is consenting to employ the prophet of godless socialism to create strife between this country and Germany. That is what I mean. I will not be silent in the presence of this kind of thing. Silence here would be wicked and evil. Mark well, I pray you the unholy association. A man, brilliant and clever, who has taken stance definitely against revealed religion and the religion of Jesus Christ; and by his own paper is advocating a socialism that is godless in its thinking and godless in its outlook; and yet, this man is to write to show how we are to defeat Germany! And think you, the Christ is in favour of it? I make my solemn protest against it in the name of Christ. What does it mean? It is the outcome of a false patriotism; it is the determined attempt to say that this nation is the only one that really matters. My brethren, here are the causes of unrest. What has Christ to say? He brings the sword, and He is against it. He is against everything that denies the absolute right of all men and all nations, and castes, and rulers, to God, and to the fellowship of their brother man. And there will be long conflict ere peace can be established. A peace based upon unfairness and injustice in thinking and attitude towards other nations is no peace, and cannot live or last.

The supreme passion of the Church of God must be for peace. We must mourn over all war. War in itself is contrary to the ultimate purpose of God. But, we must also remember the refrain of Isaiah, and the declaration of Jesus. "There is no peace … to the wicked." "I came not to send peace, but a sword." We must remember that the principle of peace is purity. To make peace with wrong, or to consent to be silent in the presence of the things that are wrong, is to destroy peace.

And yet, let the final word this morning be the personal word. What is the Prince of peace saying to thee, to thee, Oh heart of mine, Oh soul of mine? I feel as though it were almost impossible, and as though it would be almost an impertinence to ask in the case of any other man, and yet let every man ask it. What says the Prince of peace to thee, Oh heart of mine, Oh soul of mine? Does He draw the sword? Then He draws it against some evil thing in thy heart, in thy thinking, in thy outlook, in thy habits; and He will make no peace with it for the sake of ultimate peace. Then do not be at war with Him, but end the war by letting Him win, even though it mean the breaking down of the idol, and the wounding of the spirit; for out of that wounding there will come peace, God's great peace, which is first pure.