

What if we moved peacefully instead of violently? What if we considered others' feelings instead of trampling on them? What if we raised others up instead of pushing them out of sight? What if? Then at the mere sound of his name, HOPE would be signaled through the nations!

This is how hope differs from mere wishes. Hope has a path, a way of being and has Jesus to follow. Wishes are like vapor, without real substance or form. **But hope appeared in the human life of Jesus Christ.** When we follow him, we follow hope, we help create hope, and ultimately restore hope to the world.

Ephesians 3:20 gives us even more hope!

*God can do anything, you know—far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams! He does it not by pushing us around but by working with us, his Spirit deeply and gently within us.*

(The Message)

Let's stop just wishing things were different and instead, return to the path that Jesus walked and asks us to follow. Hope is fostered as we follow Jesus, who is our blessed hope.

Our hope cannot be in a particular outcome; our hope must be in a God that can do more than we ask or imagine! *"...while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ"* (Titus 2:13, NIV). □

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# Arrival of Peace

(satire of lament)

Brad Jersak chats  
with John Lennon



## WAR IS OVER! (If you want it) – John Lennon

*No* John, war isn't over. And *No*, we don't seem to want it. Thanks for offering, but we just can't. We can't afford an end to armed conflict—"it's the economy, stupid!"

I know, I know, the prophet Isaiah forecast the arrival of a Prince of peace, saying:

*He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks.*

***Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.*** —Isaiah 2:4

But you see, John, we weren't ready for a Prince of Peace. We wanted a divine warrior who would side with us to drive out and destroy our enemies. And when he didn't, we did to him what we've done with all you peace-mongers. We didn't use bullets, but you get the idea: the cross was our *No* to Jesus' way of peace.

Anyway, Christ couldn't have been referring to literal world peace, could he? His call to peace and nonviolence must have been figurative, spiritual—*peace in our hearts, right? Peace with God.*

I admit it: my heart doesn't feel peaceful if I pay attention to the human lives lost in war zones around the globe—especially children orphaned by violence or those who suffer hunger while they cower in the cold and the rubble again this Christmas.

But why so glum, John? Can't you join in the angelic festivities and sleep in heavenly peace?

If you were alive, I mean. Sorry.

You have a Bible question, John? You bet. I'm your guy. Isaiah 9:1-7... yes, I know it:

*Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan—*

*The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.*

*You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder.*

*For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor.*

*Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire.*

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders.*

*And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

*Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end.*

*He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.*

*The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this. (NIV)*

Your question, John? Fire away. (Sorry).

When was this fulfilled? Well, the child was born, the Prince of Peace appeared, the Gospel writers said Christ fulfilled the promise. **BUT.**

I don't know how to say this, John, but he came and God's people disarmed for a while. **BUT.**

Look, John, we need to be realistic here. Christ saved our souls but it's apparently up to us to save our butts, at least until he tries again. Better them than us. You understand. As Isaiah said,

*"There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked."*  
—Isaiah 57:21.

Yes, we've made sure of that.

**But Brad.**

John?

**No. It's Me.**

Lord?

**Yes. PEACE IS HERE!**

**(If you want Me). —Jesus Christ. □**

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