

WHY ARE THERE WARS?

Romans 16:20 ... “And the God of peace will crush satan under your feet shortly...”

People frequently ask: “Why are there wars?” Living in the Philippines, which has been at war within its borders for many years, you may also ask that question. My country, America, has been at war nearly continuously since the first immigrants stepped foot on our shores more than 500 years ago. The American civil war in the mid-1800s, left about 640,000 Americans dead, but most wars involving America were fought in other lands to free people from tyranny. You and I have grown up knowing nothing else. Wars seem normal to us.

There are many reasons for wars. Some are fought to expand or reclaim territory. Some wars are religious in nature; one sect fighting another sect because they disagree with one another. Oppressed peoples fight their own governments to gain their freedom, and other countries may help them accomplish that. Wars are started over wealth, natural resources, ideologies, race, clan hatred, and retaliation for perceived wrongs.

Today’s verse that the “God of peace will crush satan,” seems ironic. How or why could a god of PEACE, CRUSH someone else. But the verse reveals the reason we see so many wars, not only between nations, but between neighbors and even within families. Satan is behind every conflict. Recent Philippine headlines broke the news of a father who killed his children, another father who repeatedly raped his young daughter, and a wife who hacked her husband to pieces. Those are acts of war; one person warring against another either due to hate, desire to control, or for purely sinful and selfish desires. We continually hear of insurgents killing villagers, off-duty soldiers, and police officers. These are all acts of hatred inspired by satan.

Genuine and lasting peace is only available from God, or between men when God is at the center of their relationships. All other forms of peace are temporary and fragile. It is not possible to negotiate for peace, to have permanent truces, and reliable peace treaties between peoples or nations that are under the influence of satan. Cease-fires do not change peoples’ hearts, and treaties do not eliminate hate. Only when two factions seek and find the grace of God and salvation through Christ, can peace exist and healing prosper. As today’s verse tells us, God will eventually eliminate satan and his horrible influence over our lives. He will utterly destroy him in a final, violent battle. We will then be free to enjoy peace, love, and happiness in the context of our relationship with Christ.

People who claim that God is a god only of love and that he will never do anything violent or harsh, have no hope in the peace that only God can give. We who understand reality and know that God must eventually destroy satan and his demons, and send satan’s followers to hell, can rest in the promise of genuine peace. Only when God has crushed satan, can the peace of God dominate the earth and all creation.

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