

The Root of Pacifism in the Hebrew Scriptures

Robert Roberg

Introduction
Cain and Abel
Abraham
Yitzhak
Jacov
Joseph
Moses
Pharaoh
Amalakites
First Invasion of Canaan
Joshua, the Second Invasion
Deborah and Barak
Gideon
Samuel
Saul
David

Perhaps David repented and longed to return to the right path for he wrote in Ps.120:6: *"Too long have I lived among those who hate peace. I am a man of peace; but when I speak, they are for war."*

Ps. 34: 14 Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

David taught us to Love our enemies and pray for them.

Ps. 109:2 For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue. They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause. For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer. And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.

David taught us to not be angry

Ps. 37:8 Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret, it leads only to evil. For evil men will be cut off, but those who hope in the LORD will inherit the land. A little while, and the wicked will be no more; although you look for them, they will not be found. But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy great peace.

David said Yahveh hates those who love violence

Ps. 11:5 The LORD examines the righteous, but the wicked and those who love violence his soul hates.

David said Yahveh will destroy war and save the meek

Ps.76:1 In Judah is Yahveh known: his name is great in Israel. In Shalom also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion. There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Thou art more glorious and excellent than the mountains of prey. The stouthearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep: and none of the men of might have found their hands. At thy rebuke, O Elohad of Yacov, both the chariot and horse are cast into a dead sleep. Thou, even thou, art to be feared: and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry? Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth feared, and was still, when Yahveh arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth.

David learned that Vengeance only belongs to Yahveh

Ps. 94:1 O Elohah Yahveh, to whom vengeance belongeth; O Yahveh, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself...

David saw that it is the bloodthirsty who pervert Yahveh's message

Ps. 139:19 Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O Yahveh: depart from me therefore, ye bloody men. For they speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain. Away from me, you bloodthirsty men! (NIV)

David learned to continually pray for his enemies and to mourn when their leaders fall

Ps. 141.5 I am praying continually for them in their misfortune my prayer also shall be in their calamities. When their judges are overthrown in stony places, they shall hear my words; for they are sweet. (KJV)

I say perhaps David repented and learned to live in peace, love, and non-violence for on his deathbed he ordered the death of a man who had cursed him once. Therefore, in his final deed, he did not practice what he preached.

Solomon
Almost Jonathan
Jehoshaphat
Elisha
Hezekiah
Yahshuah

MESSIAH: THE WARRIOR KING

As I stated earlier, Yahveh planted the Israelites at the crossroads of the world to be a cradle nation for the Messiah's birth. Part of the Messiah's role was to restore the religion of Abraham, and in my opinion, to especially restore the concept of Yahveh's call to non-violence. As we have seen, a few leaders, and prophets, appeared from time to time to set things straight. The prophets kept reminding the people that Yahveh was the only warrior, and they prophesied that a Messiah was coming who would be the embodiment of the Warrior King. The Messiah would break the yoke of the oppressors, and set his people free. He would set up a kingdom of holy priests who would reign in HOLINESS, power, and prosperity.

According to the Prophet Isaiah, He would be the one to end all wars (Is. 2:4). He would be a conquering king whose sword would be his words (Is. 49:2). He would heal us by his suffering (Is. 53:5), He would take away our sins by his death (Is. 53:12). He would mount the throne of David and be our conquering king forever:

"And the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with justice from henceforth forever" (Is. 9:6). His name shall be wonderful, counselor, the Prince of Peace.

At Yahshuah's birth, angels appeared proclaiming *Peace on earth and good will to men.*

I have listed 53 New Testament scriptures in the Appendix commanding Christians to live lives of non-violence and pacifism.

Yahshuah said

- *"Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore as wise as serpents, and as harmless as doves." (Matthew 10:15)*
- *"Blessed are the Peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God." (Matthew 5:19)*

- *"Resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." (Mt. 5:39)*
- *"I say unto you love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use and persecute you, that you may be children of your father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:44-45)*
- Upon his arrest, Jesus told Peter *"put up thy sword. All who take the sword, will perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" (Mt. 26:52-53).*

The Roman Eagle Kills the Lamb

The Early Christian Writers

130 A.D. Justin Martyr said: "Before becoming Christians many of us were warlike, but we have changed our warlike weapons, beating our swords into plough shares and our spears into implements of tillage".

155 A.D. Polycarp called the Philippians to obey the word of Peter "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, or blow for blow, or cursing for cursing."

174 A.D. Tertullian issued a loud and bitter cry against the participation of certain Christians in military service. He said: "Shall it be held lawful to make an occupation (in the army), when the Lord proclaims that he who uses the sword, shall perish by the sword? And shall the son of peace take part in the battle, when it does not become him to even sue in a law court? On the contrary, if a soldier gets converted, he must abandon the military immediately."

180 A.D. Athenogaras reported: "We have learned not only not to return blow for blow, and not to go to the law with those who plunder and rob us, but to those who smite us on the one side of the face, to offer the other side also, and to those who take away our coat, to give likewise our cloak."

200 A.D. The Apostle's Regulations say that donations are not to be accepted from evil-doers such as "Actors, Dishonest Merchants, (and) Soldiers."

215 A.D. Clement of Alexandria said: "Above all Christians are not allowed to correct by violence, sinful wrong doing...For it is not in war but in peace that we are trained."

253 A.D. Origin of Alexandria said: "We no longer take up swords against nations, nor do we learn war anymore, but are become children of peace."

258 A.D. Cyprian said bitterly, "If murder is committed privately, it is a crime, but if it happens with state authority, courage is the name for it." He said "The guiltless are not permitted even to put the guilty to death."

295 A.D. A man named Maximilian was executed for refusing to serve in the Roman Army. He said, "I cannot serve for I am a Christian."

300 A.D. Lactantius of Bithynia said: "It is not lawful for a just man to engage in warfare." He described Christians as "those who are ignorant of wars, who preserve peace with all, who love all men as brothers."

300 A.D. The Apostolic Order said, "Converts must give up Sorcery, Palmistry, and Soldiering."

310 A.D. Finally, Arnobius said, that "Non-resistance had been the position of Christians from the beginning of the Church."

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

So here we are with a toe into the 21st century. We have Israeli Jihadists who feel Yahveh is asking them to purge Israel of all non-Jews, and expand her boundaries from the Egyptian Nile to the Euphrates. We have Christian Jihadists who are ready to join any crusade, anywhere, whenever one can be rightly established as having Yahveh's blessing. And we have

Islamic Jihadists who feel it is Yahveh's will to conquer the whole world and submit everyone to Islam, or the sword.

Where there is smoke there is fire. What with our scientists feverishly producing bigger, and more fiendish weapons, and what with the oil-rich Muslim nations purchasing these weapons in a mad rush, I mournfully and solemnly predict that as we enter this next century we will see the planet wracked, cracked, scorched, poisoned, polluted, burned, scathed, seared, scared, nuked, and inundated with larger and more deadly wars.

SO WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

Four things:

1. Seek Yahveh with all your heart.
2. Love Yahveh with all your heart, and soul, and mind, and strength.
3. Follow Yahshuah's Gospel that calls us to Love all people, including our enemies, and do violence to no one.
4. Stand still and see the Salvation of Yahveh.

Appendix A

53 New Testament Scriptures Calling Christians to Live in Peace and Love and Non-violence

1. "Resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." (Mt. 5:39)
2. "Remind the Christians to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing meekness to all men." (Titus 3:2)
3. "Follow Peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." (Hebrews 12:14)
4. The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves." (2 Timothy 2:24-25)
5. "Do all things without murmurings and disputings, that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation." (Phil, 2:14:15)
6. Jesus came "to guide our feet into the way of Peace." (Luke 1:79)
7. Whatever you do to another it is as though you were doing it to Jesus for he said, "In as much as ye have done it into one of the least of these, my brothers, ye have done it unto me." (Matthew 25:40)
8. "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother" (1John 3:10)
9. "He that doeth good is of God, but he that doeth evil hath not seen God." (3John 1.11)
10. "He that kills with the sword must be killed with the sword." (Revelation 13:10)
11. Forgive "one another if any man has a quarrel with any." (Colossians 3:13)
12. If anyone steals from you "take it joyfully" (Hebrews 10:34)
13. Even if you are unjustly enslaved or imprisoned, you do not resist but seek to convert your Jailers as St. Paul did. (Philippians 4:22)
14. "Be diligent that you may be found in Peace." (2 Peter 3:14)
15. However, doesn't the Bible say we are to obey the Government? Yes, in all things, which are not contrary to the Gospel, but if Jesus says live in peace and the government says go to war, then "We ought to obey God rather than men." (Acts 5:29)
16. The Fruit of the Spirit is Peace...Love...Gentleness...Meekness" (Galatians 5:22)
17. "Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of Peace." (Ephesians 4:1-3)

18. Peace is the Gospel. This is the doctrine of Christ. "Whosoever transgresses and abides not in the Doctrine of Christ hath not God." (2John 2:1)
19. "The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." (James 3:18)
20. "Whosoever compels you to go a mile with him, go with him twain." (Mt.5:41)
21. "When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another" (Matthew 10:32)
22. This world is not your home. "You are citizens of heaven." (Philippians 3:20)
23. "I say unto you love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use and persecute you, that you may be children of your father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:44-45)
24. "Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore as wise as serpents, and as harmless as doves." (Matthew 10:15)
25. "Have peace with one another." Romans 9:50)
26. "Let us follow after the things that make for peace." (Romans 14:19)
27. "God hath called us unto Peace." (1 Corinthians 7:15)
28. "Live in peace." (2 Corinthians 13:11)
29. Jesus mission was to "Preach Peace." (Acts 10:36)
30. Jesus came and "preached peace." (Ephesians 2:17)
31. "Seek Peace and ensue it." (1Peter 1:3)
32. "As you would that men would do to you, do ye also to them likewise." (Luke 6:31)
33. "We are counted as sheep for the slaughter." (Romans 8:36)
34. "Blessed are the Peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God." (Matthew 5:19)
35. "He hath given us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:18)
36. "As far as your responsibility goes, live at peace with all men." (Romans 12:18 Phillips translation)
37. "On earth peace, good will towards men." (Luke 2:14)
38. "If any man will sue thee at the law to take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." (Matthew 5:40)
39. "Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars, see that ye be not troubled." (Matthew 24:8)
40. "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight that I should be delivered of the Jews." (John 18:36)
41. "Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword, shall perish with the sword." (Matthew 26:52)
42. "Bless them that persecute you: bless and curse not." (Romans 12:14)
43. "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." (Romans 12:20)
44. "Recompense no man evil for evil." (Romans 12.:7)
45. "Being reviled, we bless. Being persecuted we suffer it. Being defamed, we entreat." (1Corinthians 4:12-13)
46. "Dearly Beloved, avenge not yourselves but rather give place unto wrath, for it is written Vengeance is mine, I will repay saith the Lord." (Romans 12:19)
47. "Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink." (Romans 12:9)
48. "See that none render evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing." (1 Peter3:9)
49. God's primary title in the New Testament is The God of Peace. It is used six times (Rom. 15:33, Heb. 13:20, Phil. 4:9, Rom. 16:20, 1 Thess. 5:3, 2 Thess. 3:16)
50. "Blessed are the Meek for they shall inherit the earth." (Mt.5.5)
51. "God is not the author of confusion, but of Peace." (1Cor.14:33)
52. "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of them that preach The Gospel of Peace."
53. "Finally Brethern, farewell, be perfect. Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace and the God of Love and Peace shall be with you." (2 Cor.13.11)

Bibliography

I have researched this subject for over 20 years, and have read many books on it. However, there were three books I found to be invaluable. They are:

1. *The Way Yahveh Fights* Lois Barret. (1991). PA: Herald Press
2. *War Peace and Non-Resistance* Guy Hershberger. (1969). PA: Herald Press
3. *Christian Attitudes Towards War and Peace* Roland Bainton, (1960). Nashville: Abingdon.

The following authors were also very helpful:

Bainton, R. H. *The Church of Our Fathers*. (1941). PA: Westminster.
Clemmer-Steiner, S. *Joining the Army that Sheds No Blood*. (1982) PA: Herald Press.
Durant, W. *The Life of Greece*. (1939). NY: Simon Schuster.
Drescher, J. *Why I am Conscientious Objector*. (1987).PA: Herald Press .
Halley. *Halley's Bible Handbook*. (1927). MI: Zondervan
Horizon History of Christianity. (1964). NY: American Heritage.
Kauffman, Donald. *What Belongs to Caesar?* (1969). PA: Herald Press.
Larousse. *The New Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology*. (1959). New York: Hamlyn .
Lasserre, J. *War and the Gospel*. (1962). PA: Herald Press.
Lehn, C. *Peace Be With You* . (1981) Faith and Life Press .
Lind, W. *Yahveh is a Warrior*. (1980). PA: Herald Press.
McGrath, Wm. *Separation Throughout Church History*. (1966). MO: Historical Mennonite Faith .
Occhigrosso, P. *The Joy of Sects*. (1994). NY: Doubleday.
Roth, W. *What About Church History?* (1964). PA: Herald Press.
Sider, R. *Christ and Violence*. (1979). PA: Herald Press.
Wallis, J. *Waging Peace*. (1988). NY: Harper and Row.
Wenger, J.C. *Pacifism and Biblical Non-Resistance*. (1967). PA: Herald Press.
Wilmington, *The Wilmington's Book of Bible Lists* () NY: Tyndale.
Yoder, J. *The Politics of Jesus* (1972) NY: Eerdmans.

Quotes from the Koran are taken from Marmaduke Pickthall's Translation published in Hyderabad India, 1938 edition.

Quotes taken from the Old and New Testaments are from the Authorized Version and used with the permission of Thomas Nelson Pub. Nashville, TN.

If you have comments write Robert@robertroberg.com For a free download or to purchase a hard copy go to <http://lulu.com/roberg>

Also visit my website <http://robertroberg.com>