

# Luke 12:49-53. Christ Foretells That the Gospel Will Occasion Divisions.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

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*Jesus came to bring division to the world, but ultimately to bring happiness and peace to the earth.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 72:7, Matthew 10:34, Luke 12:51, John 16:33, Romans 8:25

**Topics:** "Divine Judgment", "Eternal Peace"

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## Description

Favell Lee Mortimer delves into the paradox of Jesus being called the Prince of peace yet bringing division on earth before ultimate peace. The rejection and persecution of the Gospel by the world showcase the depravity of the human heart. Jesus foresaw the conflicts His Gospel would bring but endured suffering to bring everlasting peace. He longs for the day when righteousness will cover the earth, and all divisions will cease upon His second coming.

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## Transcript

The Lord Jesus is called the Prince of peace; yet he did not come to bring peace upon the earth, but rather division.

Is not this surprising? How can we understand the song of the angels, who joined in chorus at his birth, saying, "Peace on earth, good-will to men?" The difficulty, however, may be explained.

Jesus came to bring divisions first, and afterwards peace. And why did he bring divisions first? Why not peace from beginning to end? It was because the wickedness of man opposes the peaceful doctrines of the holy Gospel.

Can anything show in a stronger light the depravity of the human heart than the manner in which the Gospel has been received by the world? If any doubt whether man is very wicked, and very far gone from original righteousness, let them reflect on this fact. If pardon were now offered to the evil spirits in darkness, could they reject the boon with more contempt than the world in general has rejected the offer of pardon in the Gospel? But the world has not been satisfied with rejecting it--they have persecuted those few happy people who have accepted it. Even now there is scarcely a large family to be found, all of whom have embraced the gracious offer. In many families there are none; in others, there is one or two who have believed, while the rest despise both the message and those who believe it. Sometimes it is a pious parent, who is despised by his thoughtless children--sometimes it is a pious child, who is opposed by his

worldly parent. Nations are divided in the same manner as families. No wars have been so bitter as religious wars; no persecution so bloody as religious persecutions, or, rather, the persecutions OF the religious. Shall we think ill of religion because it produces these effects? As well might we deem the medicines of the physician hurtful, because at first they often increase the sufferings of the patient. The Lord Jesus, who foresaw all events, rejoiced that his Gospel would be preached in every land.

He said, "I am come to send fire on the earth, and what will I if it be already kindled?" What is the meaning of these words?

"What will I?" Do I wish it to be otherwise?

"If it be already kindled," if even now the Gospel has begun to create confusion.

The Prince of peace was willing that for a while confusion should prevail, in order that happiness at length might fill the earth, and endure forever. He was willing himself to encounter the most bitter sufferings, in order that afterwards he might be exalted to God's right hand. The baptism he desired was a baptism of blood. Bathed in his own blood, he suffered for our sins in Gethsemane and Calvary. He was straitened until this baptism was accomplished. He longed to finish his work, and to receive his reward; and now he longs for the period when the earth will be no more steeped in blood, but covered by the waters of righteousness. He has commanded us to pray for that glorious time, and to say, "Your kingdom come." In those days shall "the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace as long as the moon endures." (Ps. 72:7.) When Jesus comes the second time, he will put an end to all divisions, whether in families or between nations. "Violence shall no more be heard in your land, wasting nor destruction within your borders." For this delightful day the saints earnestly hope, and "with patience wait." (Rom. 8:25.)

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