

# Interrupted...by Peace

by Rev Dan Balsdon, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2020 | read online at [www.revdanbalsdon.com](http://www.revdanbalsdon.com)

---

**What has given you peace this year?**

**What is giving you peace today?**

Lydia, my youngest daughter, is 4 and an early riser – it's unusual if she wakes up after 6am, usually, around 5:30 in the morning we're awake to Lydia coming into our bedroom asking

'is it morning',

or 'can I have a cuddle',

or 'can you help me put my tights on'.

Or, wake up!

Louise, my wife and I often respond with something of a grunt, a groan, or a go and play in your bedroom, but Lydia has none of it, she's wide awake and she wants our attention.

During Advent, Christians often read some of the story of John the Baptist, an older cousin of Jesus who was himself called by God to tell people of the coming one, who would bring signs of the kingdom of God.

Right at the beginning of Mark's gospel we read some words that we also find in the Old Testament – which point to John the Baptist as a messenger preparing the way for the Lord – the coming one.

*"See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'"*

*Mark 1:2-3*

The message at the start of Mark's gospel is – 'wake up – make space for the coming one!' Pay attention to the signs of the coming kingdom.

The use of the words that are also in the Old Testament make a link with the words we find there. Some of them come from Isaiah 40, which is a chapter that begins with the words:

*Comfort, O comfort my people, says God.*

*Isaiah 40:1*

They are reassuring words, because they remind us that God cares for us, loves us and wants to comfort us. That in making space for God in our lives, the turmoil of life is interrupted by the coming one who came to bring peace to the world.

There's a myth that God is sat on a golden throne looking down on use little humans wagging his finger in judgement, saying we are awful people who deserve to be punished. There's even been Christian leaders suggesting that COVID-19 is God's punishment on us. That's codswallop.

God doesn't sit on high, at a distance, judging us. God is among us and with us.

God knows the mess that the world is in, knows we, the human beings God made, are not always the best at looking after the world and one another.

But God knows we try our best and doesn't focus all effort on punishing us. God loves us and wants our living together to be interrupted by peace, that we might live in peace with one another.

We've seen that interruption this year as we sacrifice our own wants and desires, to limit our activity and care for one another through pandemic.

Christmas reminds us that God came to live among us and show us signs of the kingdom of God now. One day Jesus will return and establish an even greater kingdom where all is well, and filled with peace.

But as we journey towards Christmas and hear the message wake up, make space for the coming one – we discover that the coming one, Jesus, has come to make God's love and care for us more real for us today. The kingdom is now.

So while we know the world isn't perfect, We know we're not perfect – perfection isn't what God is asking of us right now. What God is asking of us is to wake up and be open to be interrupted with peace, to let God's peace flow into our lives, and flow out into our relationships with one another.

May your life be interrupted... by peace.

**All shall be well in his kingdom of peace ;  
freedom shall flourish and wisdom increase ;  
justice and truth from his sceptre shall spring ;  
wrong shall be ended when Jesus is King :<sup>1</sup>**

---

<sup>1</sup> Sing we the King who is coming to reign, verse 2, by Charles Silvester Horne