



## SAFE HARBOR

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### Words of Promise and Hope

#### *Isaiah 59:14-21 English Standard Version (ESV)*

##### Judgment and Redemption

<sup>14</sup> Justice is turned back,  
and righteousness stands far away;  
for truth has stumbled in the public squares,  
and uprightness cannot enter. Humankind has faced a world that seems  
<sup>15</sup> Truth is lacking,  
and he who departs from evil makes himself a prey.

The LORD saw it, and it displeased him<sup>[a]</sup>  
that there was no justice.

<sup>16</sup> He saw that there was no man,  
and wondered that there was no one to intercede;  
then his own arm brought him salvation,  
and his righteousness upheld him.

<sup>17</sup> He put on righteousness as a breastplate,  
and a helmet of salvation on his head;  
he put on garments of vengeance for clothing,  
and wrapped himself in zeal as a cloak.

<sup>18</sup> According to their deeds, so will he repay,  
wrath to his adversaries, repayment to his enemies;  
to the coastlands he will render repayment.

<sup>19</sup> So they shall fear the name of the LORD from the west,  
and his glory from the rising of the sun;  
for he will come like a rushing stream,<sup>[b]</sup>  
which the wind of the LORD drives.

<sup>20</sup> “And a Redeemer will come to Zion,  
to those in Jacob who turn from transgression,” declares the LORD.

<sup>21</sup> “And as for me, this is my covenant with them,” says the LORD: “My Spirit that is upon you, and my words that I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth, or out of the mouth of your offspring, or out of the mouth of your children's offspring,” says the LORD, “from this time forth and forevermore.”

### *A Holiday Reminder*

It is that time of the year when we enter into the season of holidays. Soon it will be Halloween (Holy Evening), All Saints Day, Thanksgiving Day and the Christmas Season starting with Advent and moving through Christmas, New Years and Epiphany. For the most part these are days of remembrance and celebration. They are called “holidays” because the background is rooted in the Christian Religion and they were thought to be special days of prayer and thanksgiving, of sharing love and friendship, of extending of ourselves in the giving of gifts.

Yet we see that culture and society have perverted the meaning of the holiday in an unrepentant secularism having lost most if not all of their religious context. In some instances, we find the descent goes even into days of drunkenness and debauchery. Our materialistic culture has jumped on every opportunity to extend the greed of society into a false culture of idolatry that celebrates the many god and goddesses of our desires.

Is there an easy answer?

The truth is that is up to the individual Christian to stand firmly and resist the allure of the secular characteristics of the holiday as well as bringing a faith dimension to the other days set aside as days of celebration. This is more easily said than practiced. It is even more so for the churches to speak out against the evils of the culture we live in. We cannot participate in the lies of society which serve to make Christian Holy Days less than holy.

These are a few suggestions to maybe help you keep the holidays in proper perspective.

First center your celebrations around the true intent of the holiday including Scripture readings that are appropriate, prayer and conversation with others about the truth of the celebration.

Secondly the rule of thumb should be moderation in all things including eating, drinking and gift giving.

Third extend the hand of assistance to those less fortunate.

Fourth Show respect to all that you might come in contact with as well as compassion and sharing joys.

Finally, in your celebrations give thanks to God for all that He has done.

Having said all this, **MAY YOUR HOLIDAYS BE FULL OF LOVE, JOY, PEACE AND HOPE!**

## POINTS TO PONDER

With the exception of The Gospel of Luke; the Book of Acts and probably Job our Scripture was composed by Jewish authors. The words that we have from them tell the story of faith and hope in the work of Almighty God. Sometimes our tendency is to interpret the Scripture in a manner that ignores the Jewishness of the writers. The most important promise is:

“Behold, the days come,” says Yahweh,  
“that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel,  
and with the house of Judah:  
<sup>32</sup> not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the  
hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt;  
which covenant of mine they broke,  
although I was a husband to them,” says Yahweh.  
<sup>33</sup> “But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days,”  
says Yahweh:  
“I will put my law in their inward parts,  
and I will write it in their heart.  
I will be their God,  
and they shall be my people.  
<sup>34</sup> They will no longer each teach his neighbor,  
and every man teach his brother, saying, ‘Know Yahweh;’  
for they will all know me,  
from their least to their greatest,” says Yahweh:  
“for I will forgive their iniquity,  
and I will remember their sin no more.”  
(Jeremiah 31:34, WEB)

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Also a footnote:

My book of poetry, **Midnight Musings: Thoughts from a Restless Mind**, is available on Amazon and also Amazon Kindle. Your patronage and thoughts would be appreciated.