

In verse 7 the description continues: "And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox."

This is obviously not simply a picture of the peace of God in human hearts. That is a wonderful blessing that every Christian can enjoy today. Even in the midst of troubles, adversities, and difficulties of every kind, if we truly believe in Christ we can have the peace of God ruling in our hearts. How marvelous are the blessings that He gives His own during this age of violence and confusion! Yet this great blessing, which is set forth in many other Scripture passages, is certainly not what is pictured here. These verses describe a time when external danger is entirely removed.

Verse 8 adds an interesting touch: "And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den." The asp and the cockatrice are particularly venomous serpents. If you take your child for a walk in the woods, and the little one fearlessly reaches his hand toward a pretty rattlesnake, that is not a fulfillment of this prediction. The verse is not describing a time when a child will not be afraid of a snake. It is saying that there will be no reason for it to be afraid.

After my first year in seminary I spent a summer doing mission work in New Mexico. I talked to a man who told me that at one time he had lived for a considerable period in a two-room cabin in the desert. One evening his wife was away visiting her parents. Their little child, who could barely crawl, played on the floor in the front room. As the father sat in the back room of his little cabin his reading was interrupted by some unusual sounds. First he would hear a sound as if something had been struck by another object. Then there would be a louder sound of something being hit. Then the little child would laugh with glee. Soon the same sounds would be repeated, and then the child would laugh even more loudly. He wondered what the child was doing to have such a good time. Very quietly, so as