

## Dove of Peace

Every day we look for some sign of peace and unity for our country, our families and for us. What we've found is that we actually have to search for it or intentionally seek it because it doesn't seem to come easy or naturally these days. Or so it seems. We are reminded, though, of that great feeling of peace when we see doves hovering nearby. For ages, they have been associated with peace, and there are some good reasons why.

There's an old legend that portrays doves as a symbol of peace that could give insight to some of our leaders today. There were two kings headed for war. As one of them was putting on his armor, he asked for his helmet. Unfortunately, he found that a dove had made a nest in it. His mother asked him to leave the dove alone because it represented purity and love. He agreed and went to war without his helmet.

When the other king saw the first king without his helmet, he asked him what happened. They ended up calling a meeting to talk. The first king told the second king the story about the dove. The compassion and love the first king showed to the dove so moved the second king. He felt he had misjudged such a compassionate heart. So the kings sat down and made an agreement of peace.

The dove plays a great role in the Bible too, and is connected with purity, love and peace. We are all familiar with the dove Noah sent out after the flood. When it returned with an olive branch, Noah had peace of mind. He knew it was safe to leave the boat. The most important representation, however, comes when Jesus is baptized by John the Baptist. Here we see the Holy Spirit descending like a dove on Jesus.

*"As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on Him. And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love, with Him I am well pleased.'"* **Matthew 3:16-17**

What an amazing moment for John the Baptist who had just baptized the Messiah! Can you imagine watching as the Holy Spirit rests on Jesus? I wonder what went through John's mind? I wonder what Jesus was thinking and feeling as the dove settled and He heard the voice of the Father tell Him He loves Him and is well pleased with Him? For both of them, we can only imagine the peace and the hope that filled them.

Jesus left us the Holy Spirit when He ascended into heaven. The Holy Spirit is our Guide, our Counselor. Our hope is in His power. Let these words describing what we gain from the Holy Spirit fill you with peace and hope. Hide these words in your heart, especially on those days you feel challenged. And when you see a dove, remember the peace and hope of the Holy Spirit.

“Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.” **2 Cor. 3:17**

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” **Romans 15:13**

“And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever...But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.” **John 14:16, 26**

## **Prayer**

Lord,

You have put Your Spirit in me and move me to follow Your decrees and be careful to keep Your laws. You gave me an undivided heart and put a new spirit in me; You removed from me a heart of stone and gave me a heart of flesh. So I will walk by the Spirit, and I will not gratify the desires of the

flesh. I will live by the fruit of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Since I live by the Spirit, I will keep in step with the Spirit. I will not become conceited, provoking and envying others. The Spirit You gave me does not make me timid, but gives me power, love and self-discipline. Therefore, with You Holy Spirit, I will live an empowered life and walk in Your authority. Amen!