

# PEACEABLE KINGDOM — 1

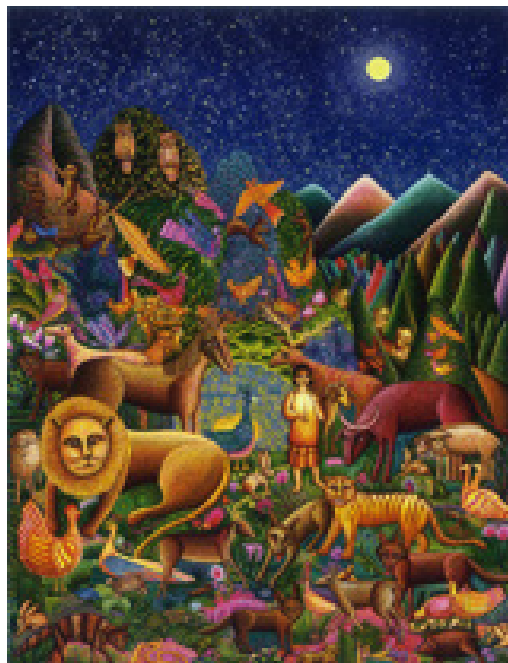
**Two centuries ago,** a Quaker minister by the name of **Edward Hicks**, painted at least 100 variations on the theme of the “peaceable Kingdom” between 1820 and 1829 (top). It is his depiction of the idyllic time of peace and harmony foreseen in **Isaiah 11: 6-9:**

**The wolf will live  
with the lamb,  
the leopard will lie down  
with the goat,  
the calf and the lion  
and the yearling together;  
and a little child  
will lead them.**

In our own time, other artists have offered their interpretation of this longed-for vision of peace:

**John August Swanson—1994;** he says, “For me, it speaks both to the desire of people to find a place of peace in this world and to the need for peace within us. It also symbolizes our responsibility to protect and care for all of creation. (middle)

**Jan Wall—2019;** she gathers only the animals of the Sierra Madre Mountains, California, at a bountiful table. (bottom)



**The infant will play  
near the cobra's den,  
and the young child  
will put its hand  
into the viper's nest.  
They will neither harm  
nor destroy on all  
my holy mountain,  
for the earth will be  
filled with the  
knowledge of the Lord  
as the waters cover  
the sea.**



# PEACEABLE KINGDOM – 2

In the medium of joyous words, theologian Elizabeth Johnson also depicts, for post-modern humans, the peace and harmony intended by the Creator for all of creation in her most recent book, *Come, Have Breakfast*, pp. 46-47, 2024.

"Midway through the third Eucharistic Prayer of the Catholic liturgy, the presider declares, '**all creation rightly gives you praise.**' .... What an expansive sense of the loving Creator would result if at the start of every gathering for christian prayer or liturgy the people called upon the ongoing praise of all creation which we humans now join. How magnificent to realize that the living God to whom we pray is also receiving the praise of the squirrel, the eagle, the trout, the firefly, the cactus, and the coral reef. **We singers sharing the journey of life together.** What desperately needed, responsible, self-sacrificing care of Earth and its species would flow as a result of such prayer.

**The benefit can be mutual.** At a time when prayer does not come easily to post-modern humans, becoming aware of nature's praise may actually allow these other creatures to help us pray. The more we attend to them, the more they can lift our hearts to God, borne on their praise.

**O let everything that breathes praise God! Psalm 150:6**

