

The Power of Peace

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Shortly before his arrest, trial and crucifixion, Jesus said:

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

John 14:27, NIV

What is Peace?

- Rest?
- Feeling of Victory after a war?
 - Not losing?
- Harmony in our family or relationships?
- Success?
- Absence of conflict?
- Nothing unjust happening around us?

What Robs our Peace?

- Think of the past year; the past couple years...
- Is your life at peace?
- Is our world at peace?
- What has caused a loss of peace?

Peace

Two different concepts of Peace in the Bible

- Shalvah:
 - Rest, Ease, Security
- Shalom:
 - Completeness, Soundness, Well Being
 - Harmony in a relationship
 - Healthy Prosperity

The Old Testament has LOT to say about
Peace (Shalom)

Mosaic Law: Animal Sacrifices

Burnt offerings and Peace offerings (*Shalem*)

- all the specific offerings seem to be various forms of Peace Offerings

Recognition that after rebellion in Eden, there is now a **profound lack of Peace:**

- We are NOT Whole
- We are NOT in harmony with God
- We are NOT full of wellness, soundness

Animal sacrifices (*Shalem*) were introduced to help people find Peace (*Shalom*) with God

First Peace Offerings at Sinai

After God gave the ten commandments, the law, the instruction for burnt offerings and peace offerings:

Moses wrote all the words of the LORD. And he rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel. Then he sent young men of the children of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD. (Exodus 24:4-5)

Burnt Offerings & Peace Offerings

Burnt offerings

- the organs and inner parts were completely burned up as a burnt offering to God

Peace Offerings

- Blood was sprinkled on the priests and people as a symbol that their sin had been atoned for: a life had been given in response to their sin
- The meat was offered to the LORD on the altar, roasted or boiled and then shared between the priests and the people. It was eaten as a Holy Meal of fellowship with each other and with God.

(Aside: NT Communion: is a type of Peace Offering meal that we share in fellowship with each other and with God)

Result of the First Peace Offering

God called Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and 70 elders of Israel part way up Mount Sinai.

..and they saw the God of Israel. And there was under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and it was like the very heavens in its clarity. But on the nobles of the children of Israel He did not lay His hand. So they saw God, and they ate and drank. (Exodus 24:10-11)

Priestly Blessing

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: "Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This is the way you shall bless the children of Israel. Say to them:

- "The LORD bless you and keep you;
- The LORD make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you;
- The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, And ***give you peace.***"

"So they shall put My name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them." (Num 6:22-27)

The 'Practice' of 'Peace'

- ***Great peace*** have those who love Your law, And nothing causes them to stumble.

(Psa 119:165)

The 'Practice' of Peace

- *Great peace* have those who love Your law, And nothing causes them to stumble. (Psa 119:165)
- Happy is the man who finds Wisdom,
And the man who gains Understanding;
... Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
And ***all her paths are peace.***
(Prov 3:13-17)

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- *Great peace* have those who love Your law, And nothing causes them to stumble. (Psa 119:165)
- Happy is the man who finds wisdom, And the man who gains understanding; ... Her ways are ways of pleasantness, And *all her paths are peace*. (Prov 3:13-17)
- Depart from evil and do good; ***Seek peace and pursue it.*** The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their cry. (Psa 34:14-15)

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- Depart from evil and do good; *Seek peace and pursue it*. The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their cry. (Psa 34:14-15)
- You will keep him in **perfect peace**, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You. (Isa 26:3)

What does it look like to Live in Peace?

But know that the LORD has set apart for Himself him who is godly; The LORD will hear when I call to Him. Be angry, and do not sin. Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still. Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, And put your trust in the LORD. ...

I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; For You alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.

(Psa 4:3-8)

What does it look like to Live in Peace?

LORD, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill? He who walks uprightly, And works righteousness, And speaks the truth in his heart; He who does not backbite with his tongue, Nor does evil to his neighbor, Nor does he take up a reproach against his friend; In whose eyes a vile person is despised, But he honors those who fear the LORD;... He who does these things shall never be moved. (Psa 15:1-5)

But there was a problem

In practice, everyone knew this Peace with God was terribly difficult to obtain, and very difficult to maintain

- No one really lived up to this ideal
- Required continual, repetitive Peace Offerings

David said: *God looks down from heaven on all mankind to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God. Everyone has turned away, all have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.*

(Psa 53:2-3)

The Promise of Peace

For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given;
And the government will be upon His shoulder.
And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

**Of the increase of His government and peace
(shalom) There will be no end,** Upon the throne
of David and over His kingdom, To order it and
establish it with judgment and justice From that
time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of
hosts will perform this. (Isa 9:6-7)

Back to Jesus: the Last Supper

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. (Mat 26:26-28)

Back to Jesus' last sermon...

"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

(John 14:1-3)

And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

(John 14:16-17)

Back to Jesus' last sermon...

"These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

(John 14:25-27)

But what does this Peace look like in the middle of great conflict?

Jesus Shows the Power of Peace

After a long day of teaching and ministering...

On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side." Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling.

But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"

(Mar 4:35-38)

Jesus Shows the Power of Peace

After the panicked disciples woke him...

Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "**Peace, be still!**" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.

But He said to them, "**Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?**" And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"

(Mar 4:39-41)

What were Jesus' Words Again?

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

John 14:27, NIV



Benediction

- "The LORD (Yahovah) bless you and keep you;
- The LORD make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you;
- The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, And ***give you Peace.***"

Numbers 6:24-26

Shalom!