

PEACE #1515:

Heb.12:11; All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

“Peace,” by the world’s definition, can be very subjective. We can have many varied definitions of what peace means to us. What one person considers as peace could be defined by another as a fire-storm. But when our Lord spoke of peace what was the context that He used to define peace? This is what we will try to discover in this study. In the original languages of the Bible, the word “peace” had a meaning far wider and richer than that which people commonly associate with the word today. In the OT, peace (*shalom*) included a range of ideas, such as *completeness, wholeness* and *well-being*. The NT, though, using the Greek word for “peace”, retained the breadth of ideas found in the OT and so gave the word a richer meaning. Even in this sense it has many applications.

It is the opposite of war and dissension; ***Luke 14:31, 32, what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and take counsel whether he is strong enough with ten-thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. Acts 12:20, Now he was very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon; and with one accord they came to him, having won over Blastus the king’s chamberlain, they were asking for peace, because their country was fed by the king’s country. Rev. 6:4, and another, a red horse, went out; and to him who sat on it, it was granted to take peace from the earth, and that men should slay one another; and a great sword was given to him.*** Let’s amplify the verse of Rev. 6:4, to see if we can get a more meaningful understanding of “peace” in the context of being the opposite of war and dissension: *and also a different horse, a flame colored fiery red horse, the symbolic color of suffering, sacrifice and sin, came out from the heavens, and to the messenger that sat upon it, it was given to him permission to actively take and collect from the habitable earth and the people of the earth attitudes and values that do not condone war and dissension, and that the human race should murder one another; and the power of a slaughtering knife was put into his hands.* All of the great commentators agree that this verse is symbolic of war. Red is symbolic of war, blood-shed and the arson of war. This verse is a companion to the verse in Matt. 24:6, 7, where Jesus speaks to us, warning us, that one of the signs of the end times is ***“wars and rumors of war, etc.”*** In every war there is slaying of one another, the sword is called great not because of the disproportionateness of the sword to the rider and his horse but because of the *constant* and *terrific* slaughter it symbolizes. This present evil age is not different from the OT in that just as they had wars, famine, and death; it is still with us today. The wild passions of the wicked and the sin over the whole of the earth constantly precipitate the wars of the NT as well as the OT. These wars are like billboards along

a highway announcing an upcoming event or need; in this case, the finality of the world as we know it and the coming judgment on all creation. Schemes and pacts to abolish war on earth, however well-intended, are hopeless. WWI was suppose to be the war that ended all wars only to find out that it was only pregnant with more wars and rumors of wars.

Peace may mean harmony (peaceful or friendly relations) among individuals; **Matt. 10:34**, *“Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. Luke 12:51, do you suppose that I came to grant peace on the earth? I tell you, no, but rather division. Acts 7:26, And on the following day he appeared to them as they were fighting together, and he tried to reconcile them in peace, saying, “Men, you are brethren, why do you injure one another?” Rom. 14:19, so then let us pursue the things that make for peace and the building up of one another.* Let’s take a closer look at **Matt. 10:34**, which seems confusing at first glance and contrary to what our Lord teaches: *“Do not suppose that I came to earth to be with you in order to cast peace and harmony on the inhabitable earth; My purpose in coming to the earth was to establish My righteousness and holiness, which brings an inner peace for those who follow Me, but for those expecting Me to cast external peace and harmony, without following My commandments and precepts, I brought disagreement and dissension.* We should not assume by reading this verse that our Lord was the purveyor of violence, quite the opposite! When He says that He did not come to bring peace He is referring to the reaction of His coming by the immorality and depravity of the world, whose occupants were quite satisfied to remain in their immorality and depravity. It brought on a clashing of morals. The Jews had this notion of great outward peace and prosperity in the days of the Messiah, which were grounded on several prophesies of the OT. But they did not correctly understand these prophesies and the disciples of Christ assumed the same misunderstanding. So Christ saw it fit to let them know the contrary; that they must not expect outward peace and worldly tranquility. For although He came to bring peace between God and sinner, by the blood of the cross, and was both the author and donor of a spiritual peace to His people, and the gospel that He brought with Him and sent them out to teach was the gospel of peace. And these teachings and preaching, along with His power, would produce peace in the consciousness of men; peace in a temporal sense, was not what came with Him, nor was it part of His mission. When He says that He instead brought a sword, it may mean that in a sense that His values and principles that He was teaching would cause divisions in our worldly relationships. Spiritually the goats would be separated from the lambs. These separations and divisions cause reason for discord, persecutions and slayings. This malice and wickedness of men was the natural outcome and consequence of His coming. This is not the result that He wanted, of course, but it was the eventual result of two mutually exclusive standards of morality colliding.

One of the names for the Messiah is “King of peace” which, obviously, means a peaceful king, **Heb. 7:1, 2, for this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all the spoils, was first of all, by the translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace.** This verse amplified would read like this: *because this man, whose name was Melchizedek, which was the representation of what Christ, as the incarnate Word came to be, as a monarch of the Salem, which is a Hebrew transliteration of the word for “peace.” He was also a High Priest or considered a sacred person that serves at the altar of the Most High God. He encountered Abraham, who is the ancestor of the Jews and thus is held in a unique place of reverence and affection by Jews, was returning back from the murdering of the monarchs that had kidnapped his relative, and he praised him and spoke well of him. And Abraham shared with Melchizedek one-tenth of all of the spoils that he collected from the murdering of the monarchs that had kidnapped his relative. We know that, before all else, that when we translate the name Melchizedek from Hebrew to English, it means “Monarch of Justice and Righteousness,” and in addition it means the Monarch of Peace.* Melchizedek was a kind of mysterious figure who appeared briefly in human history in **Gen. 14:18-20; And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and said, “Blessed by Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; and bless be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” And he gave him a tenth of all.** And then he disappeared from Scripture. Centuries later his name is mentioned by David in **Psalm 110:4; The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind, Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.** Then after a lapse of an additional few centuries, his name reappears in Hebrews. One thing is apparent: God arranged the details of his life so that he would be an excellent type of our Lord Jesus Christ. These verses give us some historical facts concerning him; he held the combined offices of king and high priest. He was the King of Salem and the priest of the Most High God. He was the political leader and spiritual leader of his people. This is, of course, God’s ideal, that there should be no separation of church and state. But, when sinful man is reigning, it is necessary to separate them. Only when Christ returns to reign in righteousness will it be possible to reunite the two **Isa. 32:1, 17; Behold a king will reign righteously, and princes will rule justly. And the work of righteousness will be peace, and the service of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever.** We also know that Melchizedek encountered Abraham when he was returning from a military victory and Melchizedek blessed him. In response Abraham gave to Melchizedek a tenth of the spoiled that he collected from the kings. In Scripture, a man’s name stands for what he is, in this case his name meant King of Righteousness and his title, King of Salem, means King of Peace. Take note that “King of Righteousness” is mentioned first, because without righteousness there can be no

peace. We can only have peace with God because our Savior met all of the righteous demands of God against our sins.

Metaphorically this Greek word for peace means peace of mind, tranquility that arises from reconciliation with God and a sense of divine favor, **Rom. 5:1, therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. 15:13, Now, may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Phil. 4:7, and the peace of God that surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Isaiah 53:5, He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our peace fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed.** Let's take a closer look at the verse in **Phil. 4:7**, which tells us that the **"peace of God surpasses our understanding"**: *When we are not troubled by anything because we know that the Lord is standing by ready to help us in anything that we ask, with thanksgiving, we will live in a state of tranquility that comes from reconciliation with God, and we will have a sense of divine favor, which exceeds the excellence, in every respect, of our mind, and that tranquility shall preserve righteously your desires, feelings, affections, passions, and impulses and your understandings will be in agreement with the oneness of the purpose of Christ Jesus.* This verse states the blessed result of leaving everything in God's hands by means of prayer with thanksgiving. This condition of peace can only be known when by God's active participation in our life, all is well with us. God creates and bestows this kind of peace. And, like a guard or sentry it will stand over our hearts and thoughts if there should be anything that disturbs them. The greatness of this peace assures its ability to guard us, for it is the peace that is exceeding our understanding. Paul is not telling us here that the peace of God is beyond our comprehension. The Scriptures tell us at length how God has brought about this peace in Christ Jesus, and all of us that have had this peace bestowed on us know its sweetness. What Paul is saying here is that this is the peace that exceeds any kind of peace that we could find in our mind or in our own strength, regarding our hearts or our thoughts. We as Christians do not have to depend on our own mind to fend off worry from our hearts or minds. Relying on their own methods in their thoughts or desires is the best that men of the world can do. In the Scriptures the heart is the center of the personality. There dwells the thoughts and reasoning with their purposes, plans of action, and personal decisions, our found. Heart, mind and thoughts are constantly subject to assaults which distress, harass, and worry us. The peace of God exceeds all of these assaults, distresses, and harassments. Our relationship with Jesus Christ, that is, in our connection with Him, is where this actual state of peace exists with its great guardian effects. If our feeling of tranquility ever subsides this divine guard will revive it. All we need is prayer and petition asking, that is, getting back under the protection of our guard, then we shall feel safe and happy again and shall joyfully offer thanksgiving.

By implication, the Greek word for “peace,” means *a state of peace or tranquility*. **Luke 2:29; “Now Lord, Thou dost let Thy bond-servant depart in peace, according to Thy word.” Luke 11:21; “When a strong man fully armed, guards his own homestead, his possessions are undisturbed.” John 16:33; “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.” Acts 9:31; So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and, going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase. 1 Cor. 14:33; For God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. 1 Thess. 5:3; While they are saying, “Peace and safety! Then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.” Judges 6:23; And the Lord said to him, “Peace be to you, do not fear; you shall not die.” Isaiah 14:30; “And those who are most helpless will eat, and the needy will lie down in security; I will destroy your root with famine, and it will kill off your survivors. Ezekiel 38:8, 11; After many days you will be summoned; in the latter years you will come into the land that is restored from the sword, whose inhabitants have been gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel which have been a continual waste; but its people were brought out from the nations, and they are living securely, all of them. And you will say, ‘I will go up against the land of unwalled villages. I will go against those who are at rest, that live securely, all of them living without walls, and having no bars or gates.** Let’s examine the verse in **John 16:33**: *The reason that I have taught you these things of what it is going to be like for you after I die and teach them as the One who has authority is so that those of you that have an intimate union with Me and are one of heart, mind, and purpose, may rest in a state of tranquility. Not like the mass of people who are hostile or at least indifferent to the truth; and as the followers of Christ you have troubles and afflictions, but be of good cheer; I, Myself, have claimed victory over the mass of people who are hostile or at least indifferent to the truth and not My followers and this includes all who are an adversary to My kingdom.* The purpose of this teaching to the disciples, which includes disciples of this present day, was so that they could be assured that they *can* live in peace. When they are hated, pursued, persecuted, falsely condemned, and even tortured, they can still have peace *in Him*. He overcame all that is evil when He died on the cross at Calvary. In spite of their tribulations they could rest assured that they were on the winning side. Also, with the coming of the Holy Spirit, they would have new powers of endurance and new courage to face the foes of their life. While enduring all of the pains of this life we can take solace in knowing that this grief will have an end, but the peace that Jesus Christ promises us will not have an end. Jesus promised His disciples that He will be there with them through whatever struggles they may encounter, just as His Father didn’t leave Him alone here on earth, He will also not leave us, as His disciples, alone here.

Biblical “peace” can also have the meaning of health, welfare, prosperity, and every kind of good. In **Luke 1:79**; that refers to Jesus Christ coming to earth and accomplishing redemption

for all of us. “the way of peace” means the way of happiness, **“To shine upon those who live in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”** “The way of peace” means the “way of happiness.” Let’s expand on this verse by amplifying the meaning of these words: *The Son of God became man to appear to those who abide in the ignorance of eternal misery and damnation and in the thickest darkness of gloom of both physical death and exclusion from the presence and favor of God that is the consequence to our sin and disobedience, to direct our feet in the way of His peace.* Christ’s coming is likened to the sunrise. For centuries, the world had lain in darkness. Now through the tender mercy of our God dawn was about to break. It would come in the person of Christ, shining on the Gentiles who were in darkness and the shadow of death, and guiding Israel’s feet into the way of peace.

Another meaning for peace is when we read about the “son of peace” which has the connotation of the “the son of happiness” or someone who is worthy of it. **Luke 2:14; glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased. Luke 10:6; And if a man of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him; but if not it will return to you.** Luke 10:6 seems like a very interesting verse that has a promise involved with it, so let’s take it apart and see the full intention of the verse: *Also, If you walk into a house to do ministry and greet the owner by saying “happiness be to this house;” this much is certain when a condition such as this exists, that the man present is “a son of happiness” and wants what you bring as your ministry offers, which makes this home a place worthy to be in a happy condition that will be given to him and his household and it will remain on them; but if a son of happiness is not present their worthiness to be happy will go back to you as one being worthy to be happy.* Christ’s disciples should accept hospitality wherever it is offered to them. If their initial greeting is favorably received, then the host is a “son of peace.” He is a man characterized by peace, and one who will receive a message of peace. If the disciples are refused, they should not be discouraged; their peace will return to them again, that is, there has been no waste or loss, and others will receive it. The very form of the greeting indicates that this is much more than just your informal greeting that you would say out of habit or politeness. If a “son of peace” resides there, that is, one who truly desires this peace that Jesus offers through His messengers, “your peace (that you obtained as a disciple of Christ) will rest on him.” Obviously if he doesn’t want the peace that you offer, then it will not stay and will be returned back to you, just as if you had given him any other gift that he refuses and hands it back to you to take elsewhere without having any effect on the homeowner or the person offering peace.

When we speak of the “gospel of peace” it means the gospel of bliss, i.e., the gospel that leads to bliss. Bliss being defined as spiritual joy or rapture. **Eph. 6:15; and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.** This verse, as many know, is part of the description of the Armor of God that He gives to us and that we should put on everyday to protect us from the evil one. Let’s dissect it literally and see its full meaning: *In addition to these*

previously mentioned pieces of spiritual armor, we should have our movements bound by the firm footing and solid knowledge of the gospel in which believers may stand firm and unmoved, like the Roman soldiers that had cleats in their shoes to help them to resist being moved. This verse suggests to us that we must have a readiness to go out with the good news of peace, and therefore partake of an invasion into enemy territory. When we relax in our tents, that is, our skin or the fleshly part of ourselves, we are in deadly peril. Our safety is to be found in following the firm footing of the beautiful feet of the Savior to the mountains, bringing glad tidings and proclaiming His peace from on high for everyone to hear and where we are obviously visible. The gospel is called the “gospel of peace” because it makes men to be of an inner peace, with peaceable tempers, disposition and behaviors. It gives peace to distressed minds and directs the way to eternal peace and disseminates peace made by the blood of Christ. This kind of peace signifies a base or a foundation and designates a firm and solid knowledge of the gospel as it proclaims peace by Jesus Christ. It yields a firm foundation for the Christian soldier to set his foot upon and stand fast on. Peace, being that to him, as the shoe is to the foot, a base or a foundation. It designs the firm standing of Christians in the faith of the gospel and so striving and contending for it, without being moved from it so that it may continue on into eternity with them.

The term “God of peace” means the author and giver of blessedness, **2 Thess. 3:16; Now may the Lord of peace Himself continually grant you peace in every circumstance. The Lord be with you all! Rom. 15:33; Now may the God of peace be with you all. Amen. Rom. 16:20; And the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. Phil. 4:9; The things you have learned, received and heard and seen in Me, practice these things; and the God of peace shall be with you. 1 Thess. 5:23; Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Heb. 13:20; Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord. Isaiah 9:6; For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.** In **Phil. 4:9**, we have another promise from our Lord Jesus Christ, I think these promises are important for us to first hear about and then proceed to believe in them because they give us strength when we encounter times that our difficult to get through: *In like manner you have comprehended the instructions concerning the facts and plan of salvation with a moral bearing and responsibility and have received for yourself into your mind the things that I taught and have understood and witnessed in me, and that I exercise in my conduct; by doing what I do the Giver of Blessedness shall continually be in your midst.* In this verse the Apostle Paul sets himself forth as a pattern saint. He urges the believers to practice the things which they learned from him and which they saw in his life. The fact that this comes so closely after verse 8 which says, **“Finally brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is**

right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things;” is significant. Right living is a result of right thinking. If a person’s thought life is pure, then his life will be pure. On the other hand, if a person’s mind is a fountain of corruption, then you can be sure that the polluted stream that he is drinking from is filthy also. And we should always remember that if a person thinks an evil thought long enough, he will eventually attempt to do it. Those who are faithful in following the example of the apostle are promised that “the God of peace will be with them.” In verse 7, which says; ***“And the peace of God that surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus,”*** the “peace of God” is the portion of those who are prayerful; here the “God of Peace,” is the Companion of those who are holy. The thought here is that God will make Himself very near and dear in present experiences to all whose lives are embodiments of the truth.

“Your peace,” as spoken of in the Gospels means the good or blessing which you have in Christ and share through your salutation and benediction, benediction here has the meaning of “an invocation of a divine blessing;” we are invoking God to send a blessing. ***John 14:27; “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, nor let it be fearful.”*** In the Gospel of John our Lord points out to us that the world, that is, everything that is not within His kingdom, has a different definition of “peace” than He does. Jesus is preparing His disciples for His leaving them because of His sacrificial death. He wants to reassure them that although He is leaving them physically, in spirit, He is still with them. So let’s look at this verse in an amplified way: *My blessing that I have given to you I am leaving with you, but not in the same way as this present evil world would with its order of things that are opposed to the kingdom of Christ and is transient, worthless, and evil, both physically and morally would present peace. You have no need to let this present evil age cause your mind and feelings to neither be disturbed with various emotions such as fear over what I am telling you, nor do you have a reason to be afraid of anything.* A person who is about to die usually writes a last will and testament in which he leaves his possessions to his loved ones. Here the Lord Jesus is doing that very thing. However, He did not bequeath material things but something that money cannot buy—peace, inward peace of conscience that arises from a sense of pardoned sin and reconciliation with God. Christ can give it because He purchased it with His own blood at Calvary. He doesn’t give it as the world would give—sparingly, selfishly, and for a short time. His gift of peace is forever. Why then should a Christian be troubled or afraid? The expression “with peace” means with good wishes, invoking a divine blessing, or kindness. The simple term “in peace” is used in salutations, either at meeting or parting. ***Acts 15:33; And after they had spent time there, they were sent away from the brethren in peace to those who had sent them out. Heb.11:31; By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace. 1 Cor. 16:11; Let no one therefore despise him. But send him on his way in***

peace, so that he may come to me; for I expect him with the brethren. As we proceed with our study of the word “peace” it is becoming more and more obvious the importance that this word held in Biblical times. **1 Cor. 16:11** amplified could read like this: *Do not let any one, I exhort you, treat Timothy with scorn. But accompany him on his way as a token of honor and respect in peace, so that he may come on his way to me; because I am watching for him with the brothers in Christ.* Because of Timothy’s faithful service for Christ, no one should despise him. Instead, an earnest effort should be made to send him on his journey in peace, that he might return to Paul in due time. Paul was looking forward to a reunion with Timothy and the brethren. Since Timothy was considerably younger than most of the disciples in Paul’s circle of brethren, it seems that some held his age against him and did not give him the respect of a knowledgeable disciple based solely on his age. A mistake that many of us even today make is that we equate knowledge or wisdom with age when many more factors should come into play when discerning someone’s legitimacy as a disciple. Sometimes we need to guard ourselves against jealousy creeping in among our congregation. One way to prevent or to stifle jealousy of one man’s gift as opposed to another is to remember that we all have been blessed with a gift to be used in the body and one is not more important than another; all of the gifts are necessary for a functioning church.

As we continue on in the meaning of peace that is used either in parting or meeting we have more examples that have a little more specified meaning in that it can also mean “Peace be unto you.” **Luke 24:36; and while they were telling these things, He Himself stood in their midst (ancient mss. add; “and said to them Peace be unto you”). John 20:19, 21, 26; When therefore it was evening, on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst, and said to them, “Peace be with you.” (21) Jesus therefore said to them again, “peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” (26) And after eight days again His disciples were inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst, and said, “Peace be with you.” Dan. 10:19; And he said, “O man of high esteem, do not be afraid. Peace be with you; take courage and be courageous!” Now as soon as he spoke to me I received strength and said, “May my Lord speak, for you have strengthened me.”** Let’s take a look at this verse in **John 20:21**, because we not only see an example of the expression “peace be with you,” but we also see a charge to us, or a command that possibly gets overlooked: *there upon wishing to put His disciples at ease Jesus repeated to them once more, “peace be unto you; in a like manner that My Father, the One that has authority over Me, has sent Me forth on a mission from My heavenly abode to earth, to save, I also send you forth on the same mission.”* When we think about these greetings being so close together (verses 19, 21, 26) we can begin to think that Jesus is just repeating Himself as more disciples are added to the room, or possibly He is walking around the room and greeting others that may have not been included in His other greetings, but the only part of His greeting that is repeated is “peace

be unto you.” His second greeting and gift of assurance forms the basis of His commission that He is giving to them, the mission of evangelism. This peaceful greeting is not to merely fortify the hearts of the disciples while they are among the hatred of the world; but He is giving them His peace. They are to dispense to the world the peace of Jesus because they are witnesses and messengers of all that He has done and all that He has taught. The sum of the gospel is “peace,” **Eph. 2:17; And He came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near;** and hence it is called the gospel of peace, **Eph. 6:15; and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.** In fact, Jesus Himself is our peace, and all who preach must bring the word sent by God, **“preaching peace by Jesus Christ, Acts 10:36.”** The first greeting of peace does not only include all of the disciples or all of the apostles less Thomas. The commission to bring the gospel of peace and salvation to the world belongs to the entire church, **Eph. 4:11; And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists and some as pastors and teachers; Matt. 28:18-20; And Jesus came up to them and spoke saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”** With this great commission Jesus gave the office of the ministry to the church as His own arrangement of the continuation of the public work of the gospel administration. Jesus Himself selected and appointed the Apostles because their work was unique in that the apostolic word was to form the foundation of the church for all time, **Eph. 2:20; having been built upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, Christ Himself being the cornerstone.** Jesus even in this present day works in the world through the church as a whole with its public work committed to the Christian ministry by Jesus through the church. In this sense Jesus says to all believers **“As the Father has commissioned Me, I too, am sending you;”** this necessarily includes all believers present! This special part of Jesus’ commission had already begun to be arranged as far as the apostles were concerned and would further arrange it when the time came through the apostles in the church under the guidance of the Spirit. As the Father sent Jesus, so Jesus now sends all His believers, i.e. His church not merely the eleven. The redemptive work of Jesus is now finished, the words **“has sent Me”** denotes the act is complete. Now begins the gospel, the evangelizing mission on the part of all of the disciples of Jesus. Jesus was sent when He came into the world, but His main work began when He was thirty years old. In a few days the evangelizing work of the church and the part of the eleven had in it would begin. As to the eleven, they had known for a long time that this would be their work. Up until this point His work was not finished and His death made it appear as though all had been in vain; now raised from the dead and glorified, He tells the disciples that their work will, indeed, go on and it continues even today.

In letters the word for “peace” can mean “peace unto this house,” which in a further meaning means “every good wish for this house.” **Rom. 1:7, to all who are beloved of God in**

Rome, called saints; grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. 2:10; But glory an honor and peace to every man who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 1 Cor. 1:3; Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Cor. 1:2; grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Gal. 1:3; Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Luke 10:5; “And whatever house you enter, first say, Peace be to this house.” Let’s apply the verse of **Luke 10:5**, to gather more understanding of the purpose of this verse: *Also keep this in mind, while you are invited into a person’s home as you seek rest, quiet, and refreshment, the first thing you should do is embrace them and salute them saying... “I pray every good wish be granted for this house and its residents from Jesus Christ Himself.”* We should not get the wrong impression here that as the eleven were going out to evangelize that any two of them would enter any house in a town or village at random or without invitation. Matt. 10:11 makes their approach a little more discretionary; **“And into whatever city or village you enter, inquire who is worthy in it; and abide there until you go away.”** When they were preaching in a place, they would wait for some person that would extend the two men an invitation. Now, upon entering such a home their orders were to say, “Peace to this house!” This was not the ordinary greeting current among the Jews and that ought to be apparent by what follows in the next verses. Jesus refers to a greeting from them as apostles as bearers of His own divine peace. By their greeting they are to extend this peace as if Jesus Himself did in John 20:19, which we read in the previous paragraph. This peace is an objective gift, the peace brought by the gospel, which makes God our friend and us His children so that all is well with us. It is to be a permanent possession. THE PEACE THAT WE EXPERIENCE IN OUR LIFE COMES DIRECTLY FROM THE PROVISION OF RECONCILIATION WITH GOD CONCERNING OUR SIN! And from it the subjective feeling and enjoyment of peace are to flow. This feeling may fluctuate, but its source is permanent, and the feeling can thus be renewed again and again.

In the OT the equivalent word *shalom* meant wholeness, soundness, hence health, well-being, prosperity; more particularly peace as opposed to war or concord as opposed to strife. God is said to be the God of peace, not as one who needs peace, but one who dispenses peace. He expects peace from His people, meaning the absence of confusion, **Rom. 14:17; For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor. 7:15; Yet if the unbelieving one leaves, let him leave; the brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases, but God has called us to peace. 1 Cor. 14:33; For God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. Eph. 4:1-3; I entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Heb. 12:14; Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.** Let’s take a look at **1 Cor. 14:33** since it states a part of the definition of this kind of peace: *Because our Triune God is not a God*

that is unstable but is a God whose character and disposition is absent of confusion, in the same manner so should be the resting places of the whole congregation of God's called people. In any case, in any part of our living if a meeting is the scene of pandemonium and disorder, then you can be sure that the Spirit of God is not in control. When we say that our God is a God of peace connected with that peace is a sense of well-being and quiet satisfaction. Confusion is full of sinful zeal and contentions. God does not want the church to be disturbed and upset by the manner in which His gifts are used; He wants it to grow and prosper in peace. If any other church tolerates confusion that church too is in disharmony with God. A spirit of individualism prompts one congregation to do what it prefers even though it contradicts its sister churches. Churches should promote true fellowship, loving regard for others and inward and outward harmony. He rewards those who practice this peace, **James 3:18; And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.** The reward of being a person that lives their life according to being a "peacemaker," as in the Beatitudes, is that you will be a person of righteousness. So this begs the question, can you be a person that practices righteousness without being a person that pursues and lives by the teaching of Paul that says, **Rom. 12:18; If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.** Let's mine this verse of its precious nuggets to see if we can find the answer to that question: *Also the fruit of righteousness is the good that is produced, which is the "Word of Life" sown by our teacher, Jesus Christ, and it remains in the absence of confusion by those who bring about the lack of confusion that is obvious to the senses.* Here we are reminded that life is like the farming process. We have the farmer (the wise man who is the peacemaker); the climate (peace); and the harvest (righteousness). The farmer wants to raise a crop of righteousness. Can this be done in an atmosphere of quarrels and bickering? No, the sowing must take place under peaceful conditions. It must be done by those who are of a peaceful disposition. A harvest of uprightness will be produced in their own lives and in the lives of those to whom they minister. Once again James has put our faith on trial, this time with regard to the type of wisdom we manifest in our everyday life. We must ask ourselves—"Do I respect the proud men of this world more than the humble believer in the Lord Jesus Christ?" "Do I serve the Lord without caring who gets the credit?" "Or do I sometimes use questionable means in order to get good results?" "Am I guilty of flattery in order to influence people?" "Do I harbor jealousy and resentment in my heart?" "Do I resort to sarcasm and unkind remarks?" "Am I pure in thought, in speech, in morals?"

But those who disregard the kind of peace that brings the absence of confusion will be punished by God if they do not change their pathway of life. Peace is a blessing of which God alone is the author, **Job 25:2; dominion and awe belong to Him who establishes peace in His heights. Ps. 147:14 He makes peace in your borders. Is. 45:7; The One forming light and creating darkness, causing well-being (or peace) and creating calamity; I am the Lord who does all these.** Let's take apart this verse in Job 25:2: *Regal reign, and reverence are with Him*

as He is the One who accomplishes all of His activities with the distinct purpose and moral obligation of making peace a reason for Him to be worthy of praise. This verse states that dominion and fear are not with (or to) man, but with God as may easily be perceived from the whole context of the verse, even though God's name is not used it is implied in this verse. What He is in possession of is universal; His kingdom rules over all. He rules over all of the angels, good and bad, over all men, over all the nations of the world, and the great men in it. He rules over the kings and the princes of the world; and over all, of every age, sex, and condition. And this rule is absolute; there is no man who can wrestle this control away from Him. He governs according to His will and He will not let man or any other being take control of His ways. He is not accountable to anyone for what He does (because everything He does is just and righteous) and His kingdom is an everlasting one. His dominion over it is forever and ever. His name is holy and revered and so is His nature and everything that belongs to Him. He is revered by the angels that hide their faces (in humility and submission) from Him and cast their crowns before Him at His feet and by the saints on earth whose assemblies He is served with godly reverence. All who inhabit the world should stand in awe because of the glory of His nature, the greatness of His works, and the goodness of His providence. In the worldly high places and among great men of it He creates and commands peace and causes war among them to cease, whenever it is His pleasure. And in the atmosphere of the air where there are mighty storms, often thunder and lightning storms and tempest of wind, hail, and rain, and yet when He says "peace, be still" all is serene and quiet. And in the heavens the sun, moon and stars which know their appointed times and seasons keep their place or course and do their work. And all of the angels in heaven that have various offices assigned to them readily do His will and are in utmost harmony and concord among themselves and show no reluctance to Him or any discord toward each other. Since God is the author of this peace, he is the only One who can bestow it upon the righteous, upon the positional perfect man, that is those who love God's law and follow divine wisdom, ***Ps. 4:8; In peace I will both lie down and sleep, For Thou alone, O Lord, dost make me dwell in safety. Job 5:23; For you will be in league with the stones of the field; and the beasts of the field will be at peace with you. Is. 32:17; And the work of righteousness will be peace, and the service of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever.*** Let's apply what Isaiah has taught us: *And the workmanship and the deeds that are accomplished by blameless conduct and integrity, that is right actions, justice, and right attitudes, will be peace and tranquility, and the results of serving in blameless conduct and integrity is an inner confidence and calm assurance for time beyond this temporal sphere.* We are, at this time, and have since the genesis of this present evil age, been living in false peace. This false peace was predicted by Isaiah to last a very long time until at last the destruction of the false rest would be followed by the realization of the true. This realization will not come as a result of anything that man has accomplished, because righteousness cannot flow from sinful man. There is no justification or salvation in the works of man, so what flows from there cannot be true peace

without being reconciled to God. Man's sanctification is indeed the work of God that originated from the pouring forth of His Spirit. The resulting peace from the work of God is not in comparison to any peace that man might imagine. Yet peace is only one part of the branch of the vine. The righteousness that is manifested in man is the righteousness of Christ. This was a work that was proposed to him, which he undertook, and was produced from him not by his merits but through the gifting of Jesus Christ. The consequence of allowing Christ's righteousness to flow through us is peace, inward peace, now and forever. The righteousness of Christ removes the guilt of sin from the conscience, justifies all things, and yields a tranquility and serenity of mind. This peace, which is a true peace, will be an everlasting peace, in this world and in the world to come.

Peace is a gift that He desires to impart to all of His people, but which He is often unable to grant because of their sins. There can be no peace for the wicked. Those who hope for it, while continuing in their iniquity, are self deceived, ***Jer. 6:14; And they have healed the brokenness of My people superficially, saying "peace, peace", but there is no peace. Jer. 8:11; And they heal the brokenness of the daughter of My people superficially saying "peace, peace," but there is not peace. Jer. 8:15; We waited for peace, but no good came; for a time of healing, but behold terror! Ezek. 13:10; It is definitely because they have misled My people by saying "Peace!" when there is no peace. Ezek.13:16; the prophets of Israel who prophesy to Jerusalem, and who see visions of peace for her when there is no peace, declares the Lord God.*** In these verses we can see that the people are self deceived or being deceived by trying to convince themselves that they can have peace while disobeying God's commands and will for them. One of the most obvious things that we can discover while studying God's word is that His desire for us is to have peace in our life and that by living outside of His will we are taking a path that leads to the opposite of peace. True peace can only come through reconciliation with God through Christ and His work. Those who hope for peace, while continuing on in their iniquity, are only self deceived. Let's take an amplified look at Jer. 6:14; *they have restored the souls of the Lord's people to superficial peace, that is those who have the Lord as one's God, but this is also the primary reason for their suffering due to disobedience to God, but they only trivially communicate to them with their actions along with their words, Peace of God, peace of God on you, when, because of their disobedience, there is no peace and tranquility from God.* At this time in Israel's history there were present a lot of lying priests and prophets. They were basically paid to tell the people what they wanted to hear rather than the truth. They only pretended to heal the people of their sin since these were not God appointed officials. They convince the people that their lifestyle was okay and that they could be forgiven while at the same time being disobedient to God. They were told to believe in God's peace with a false assurance that God would bring them peace, even while their enemies were building up forces readying themselves to plunder the people Israel. The true prophets were warning them that their greed and base covetousness would cause them to lose all of their possessions as an act of

reproof from God. The judgment of God would eventually fall on all of them, the great and the small, the mean and the powerful, because they are all going after base gain. And the teachers who ought to lead the people on the true way were also pursuing deceit and dishonesty. They speak of peace and healing where there is no peace; because they do not address the real problem, but choose instead to sweep the problem under the rug where it is not visible, hoping that somehow it will go away on its own. They treat the truth in a trifling way and refuse to look at the real dangers of not dealing with their issues.

Characteristic of the NT is the view of peace as the present possession of the believer. In a single case it is used by Paul of the future blessedness which is to be expected by the righteous and the Second Coming, **Rom. 2:9, 10; *There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also the Greek, but the glory and honor and peace to every man who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*** Once again Paul talks about where the Christian stands positionally, that is, the blessings of being a Christian that are not yet fully realized in a practical sense here on earth but a promised confidence to the believer as an eventual outcome of his faithfulness to the Lord. It's like having a gift given to you that no one can take away from you, but you just can't open it until a future date. Real, full, genuine peace is promised to us and is our present possession today. Let's unwrap what Paul is teaching us: *There will be anguish, distress, and troubles pressing in from outside sources upon every man whose habitual actions indicate that he is bad in heart, conduct, and character, both the Jews having received this gospel first, but also then the non-Jews; but eternal life, dignity, and future blessedness is promised to all persons who are habitually committed to doing what is morally good, are scrupulous, and loving righteousness, both to the Jew who received this gospel first and then to the non-Jews.* Tribulation and anguish are expressive of the second death, the torments of hell, the worm that never dies, the fire that is never quenched. These things are the appropriate judgment of God on those who do evil, whose course of life and conversation are evil. For this, the soul that chooses to continue on in sin shall die, unless satisfaction is made for his sins by accepting and believing in the blood of Christ. In this verse the "Jew first and also the Greek" shows that the judgment of God will be according to the "light" received. The Jews were enlightened to the gospel first because they were God's chosen people, His chosen evangelists. They failed. So He, rather than condemning all men, which would've been appropriate, chose instead to allow the Gentile (Greek) to carry the message. Since the Jews were the first to be enlightened, they are the first in responsibility. This aspect of God's judgment is further carried out in verses 12-16. But glory, honor and peace, which are words used to explain eternal life, and the crown of glory that does not fade away, will be awarded to us as we will be considered as kings and priests as we sit at Christ's right hand of His throne. All of this will be rendered to the man that does good, not that good works are the cause of salvation, but they are testimonies of faith. They are the fruits of grace with which salvation is connected. The expression "to the Jews first and also to the Greek" cannot indicate

favoritism, because the next verse points out God's impartial judgment. It only indicates the timeliness of the gospel going out, referencing verse 1:16, ***For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*** It was proclaimed first to the Jews and the Jews were the first believers. But in general, the peace that Paul talks about denotes the state of the Christian in this present life. It was so used by Jesus in His farewell promise, ***My peace I give unto you (John 14:27).*** And this is how the word peace was represented by Paul in his teachings, in which case peace acquires the technical meaning of the tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, fearing nothing from Christ and consequently content with its earthly lot, whatever it is. This is the direct result of redemption by Christ and consists primarily of a state of conscious reconciliation with God, as we seen in earlier verse of Romans 5:1, although "peace" is often used in a broader sense to denote all the blessings which accompany and flow from reconciliation .

In the original languages of the Bible, the word "peace" had a meaning far wider and richer than that which people commonly associate with the word today. In the OT, the word "peace," included a range of ideas, such as completeness, wholeness, and well-being. The NT, though, using the Greek word for "peace," retained the breadth of ideas found in the OT, and so gave the word a richer meaning. According to the Hebrews' understanding, "peace," was a state of well-being that included good health, prosperity, contentment, security, and harmonious relationships. ***Ps. 85:8-9, I will hear (or, let me hear) what God the Lord will say; for He will speak peace to His people, (even to) to His godly ones; but let them not turn back to their folly (or stupidity). Surely His salvation is near to those who fear (or, reverence) Him, that glory may dwell in our land. Isa. 26:1-4, In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah: "we have a strong city; He sets up walls and ramparts for security. Open the gates that the righteous nation may enter, the one that remains faithful (or keeps faithfulness). The steadfast of mind Thou wilt keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in Thee. Trust in the Lord forever, For in God the Lord, we have an everlasting rock."*** ***Lam. 3:17, And my soul has been rejected from peace; I have forgotten happiness. Zech. 8:12, For there will be peace for the seed: the vine will yield its fruit, the land will yield its produce, and the heavens will give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these things.*** In our day we hear plenty of references to something being "like a rock," maybe not realizing that this is a reference to Isa 26:1-4. We refer to it to describe something that we consider as being strong, immovable, able to weather storms, durable, steadfast, long-lasting etc. Of course all of these things can be said about the person that Isaiah refers to in these verses. Let's amplify this verse to try to bring out everything that Isaiah wanted to teach us: *In that time these lyrics will be sung as praise in the Promised Land of Judah: "We have a strong and powerful fortified city; His salvation is in His mighty protective canopy over God's people and entrenchments for their deliverance. "Open the main entrance to the city, so that the holy nation created by God, who has conformed to the standards set by God that define justice and righteousness, may enter in,*

that is, those who have preserved their trustworthy character. He sustains the thoughts of perfect peace in the minds of those He preserves and maintains, because they feel trust in Him for their safety and security. Feel safe and secure in the Lord perpetually, because in God the Lord, we have a lifetime of stability that we can count on. The people in the land of Judah can boast of an impregnable city. A city that is strong, i.e., of an impregnable offence and defense, which is Jehovah.

The figure of the impregnable city indicates what He is constantly doing, and ever doing afresh; for the walls and the ramparts of Jerusalem are not dead stone but are ever living and never exhausted salvation. Just as in other places of the Bible God is called the Wall of Jerusalem and a Wall of Fire. In verse 1, as we read it, we think of the city as still being empty; for like paradise, in which man was placed, it is first of all a creation of God; and hence we hear the command to “open the gates that the righteous may enter, those who keep truthfulness.” The cry is from heaven, and to those who open the gates, if we are at liberty to inquire who *they* are, they must be angels. A righteous nation is the church of the righteous and has it has been established in a covenant of truth towards God, who keeps, or is the preserver of truth. The relation of Jehovah to Israel is now a permanent one, with a distinct reference to the church in the last days. The state of mind that is mentioned in these verses is of the persons who possess peace as a part of and according to his inmost nature. The mind is the whole attitude and habit of a man inwardly constituted, i.e., as being what he is capable of in thought and will. It is the same as having a firm hold in itself, that is people of peace holding onto the peace of God, and this it has whenever it has a firm hold on God. This is the mind of a new Israel, and Jehovah preserves it, i.e., so that deep and constant peace abides within the church. Such a mind is preserved by Jehovah because its’ righteous people puts its trust in Jehovah. To hang onto God, or to be thoroughly devoted to Him, secures both stability and peace. Then in verse 4 we hear another voice of exhortation, as if from heaven, exhorting Israel to continue in this mindset. Here He is referred to as our rock, our everlasting rock, our Redeemer. He is like a huge boulder, always there with us to protect us and sustain us no matter what circumstances surround us, the Rock doesn’t move.

A prayer for God’s peace upon a person, nation, or church was a prayer for the wide-ranging blessing of God, **Num. 6:26; The Lord lift up His countenance on you, and give you peace. Ps. 122:6; Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: “May they prosper who love you.”** Numbers 6:26 amplified could read like this: *May the One who was, who is, and will always be, cause the reflection of His attributes to be reflected on you, and commit His tranquility to be with you.* In this verse when it says “**the Lord lift His countenance on you**” it means to show His favor and His face. May He look cheerfully on His people and declare Himself to be well pleased. If we could see Him He would be smiling upon them indulging them with His love and restoring them to the joys of salvation. He would be upholding them with His free spirit and so causing them to

walk pleasantly and comfortably in the ways of God, expecting eternal life and happiness. As God's free gift through Christ, He gives them peace, all needful prosperity, internal peace of mind, through the blood and righteousness of Christ. He is the peace-maker, the peace-giver, and the eternal peace for the world.

The greeting of "peace" with which people greeted each other was both an inquiry after and a wish for a person's well-being, **1 Pet. 5:14; Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace be to you all who are in Christ.** It's very common for us, in our culture, to greet one another by saying "How are you," or "How do you do?" In biblical language "peace" has the same meaning. These greetings at some time probably meant something concerning a genuine interest, but they have been more or less demoted to just being common place courtesies. Most people don't really want to know how you are doing, or how you do something. They are just culturally accepted greetings. The biblical greetings, for the most part, had genuineness to them, because the wish was for God's peace to be with them and they had a true affection for each other. So let's look at this verse and amplify it a little more: *Salute and embrace one another in a token of friendship, with affectionate regard, good will, and benevolence, as having an intimate union, oneness of heart, mind, and purpose, a union with Christ by faith as being the branches of the vine. May the peace of Christ be with every one of you who are in Christ, Jesus, amen.* The obligation of brotherly love is a standing order for the church, though the manner of expressing it may vary in cultures and times. The word "peace" is a tranquil word to use with the storm-tossed saints, who are enduring affliction for the name of Christ. Jesus whispers "peace" to His blood-bought flock as they suffer for Him in the midst of a turbulent society. Unfortunately we, as members of Christ's church, have seemed to also have demoted the true meaning of peace as it was intended, by Jesus Himself.

Since peace was often linked with the blessing of God it became linked also with God's salvation, **Isa. 26:12; Lord, thou wilt establish peace for us, since Thou hast also performed for us all our works.** Isaiah prophesied that if we do the Lord's work, that is, if we are obedient to His statutes and commands, we can assume that we will be blessed with His peace. Let's take this verse apart and see if it speaks to us in a deeper sense: *To the One who was, the One who is, and the One who will always be, You will establish and create for us a blessing of tranquility for when we come and when we go, even though You also have created for us every one of our works of salvation and judgment.* The Jews, or the Israelites, are here expressing a certain hope of a future, of an undisturbed state of peace, in this verse. And this hope is founded on the fact that all of those who are a part of the church have acted out their calling faithfully but, at the same time, realize that this has not been accomplished by any means in their own power, but has all been the power of Jehovah. And the deliverance that has just been obtained from the yoke of not only the Egyptians but from who they are in their sin as well, is also the work of Jehovah. This blessing is active and available to the church of today also. We can live out our

life in a blessing of tranquility by answering His call and during the course of responding give Him the credit for all that is accomplished. When God warned all of the OT Israelites of certain judgment if they continued in their sin, false prophets comforted the rebellious people with false assurances of salvation, ***Jer. 8:10-11 therefore I will give their wives to others, their fields to new owners; because from the least to the greatest everyone is greedy for gain; from the prophet even to the priest. And they heal the brokenness of the daughter of My people superficially, saying "Peace, peace," but there is no peace. Jer.8:15; We waited for peace but no good came; for a time of healing, but behold, terror! Jer. 14:19; Hast Thou completely rejected Judah? Or hath Thou loathed Zion? Why hast Thou stricken us so that we are beyond healing? We waited for peace, but nothing good came; and a time for healing, but behold terror! Ezek. 13:10; It is definitely because they have misled My people by saying "Peace!" when there is no peace. And when anyone builds a wall, behold, they plaster it over with whitewash.*** The words of Jeremiah in verses 8:10-11, could very well have been written for us to use today, so let's take that verse apart and see if we can gather more fruit from it: *Since the men, who consider themselves to be wise, have rejected the word of the Lord, I will place their women with others who are strangers to them, and I will give their pasturelands to their conquerors because they have broken My covenant relationship with them; so that from the entirety of them all from the most insignificant inclusive to the most significant is judged as dishonest, because those who proclaim to say what the Lord gave them to say, including the mediators between God and His people, they all perform distinct activities that are lies. And they restore the ruination of the citizens of My cities in a trivial way communicating this to them by their actions as well as their deeds, "God's peace and tranquility is here," but there is no peace and tranquility from God present.* There could be no salvation, no peace, for the wicked. After the years of exile in Babylon, however, the good news of peace would prepare a repentant people for salvation from captivity and return to their homeland. Don't let this parallel of the Jews being in captivity because of their rebellion toward God, followed by them then, after finding a repentant heart and gaining freedom of "peace" with God, escape your notice. The same thing is true about us today. When we rebel toward God, that is when we sin, we are captives of that sin for the moment, but when we find a true confession and repentance within us, we also are freed to enjoy God's peace in His forgiveness.

No matter what expressions of salvation people of the OT times experienced, the fullness of salvation awaited the coming of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. The peace that He brought is an everlasting peace. It is available to all people now and will reach its fullest expression in a restored universe at the end of this age, ***Isaiah 65:17-25; For behold I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind (or to your heart). But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing, and her people for gladness. I will also rejoice in Jerusalem, and be glad in My people; and there will no longer be heard in her the voice of weeping and the***

sound of crying. No longer will there be in it (or from there) an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out (fill out) his days; for the youth will die at the age of 100 and the one who does not reach the age (or misses the mark) of 100 shall be thought accursed. And they shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall also plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build, and another inhabit, they shall not plant, and another eat; for as the lifetime of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, and My chosen ones shall wear out the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they are the offspring of those blessed by the Lord, and their descendants with them. It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall graze together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox; and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain, says the Lord. Rev. 21:1-5; And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the Tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell (or tabernacle) among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them (and be their God), and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true." Rev. 21:22-24; And I saw no temple (or sanctuary) in it, for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are its temple (or sanctuary). And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. And the nations shall walk by its light, and the kings of the earth shall bring (or bring) their glory into it. Wow! John and Isaiah have really ministered to us in these verses. How could we not have God's peace knowing that these are the things that we have to look forward to in our next life? Let's read in amplified style Rev. 21:22-24 to gain wisdom and knowledge and understanding more in depth: Also I perceived with my eyes and my mind that there was no temple of God in heaven, which corresponded to that which was in Jerusalem, because the mighty, omnipotent Triune God, and the exalted Christ, is its temple. Also the seat of the Messiah's Kingdom has no personal needs, necessities, nor want of the splendor of the sun nor of the brightness of the moon to give light upon it, because the things about God that excite our admiration, the dignity and splendor of His glory, and is the portable lamp of the Messiah, the Lamb, has given light to the New Jerusalem. And the elect race of the church of God shall move about in the transparency of their identity in Christ by its dazzling light that comes from the splendor and glory which surrounds the throne of God in which He dwells, and those who govern the earth shall bring their glory into it also. Certain things are missing from the city of the New Jerusalem that was contained in the old Jerusalem. No temple is necessary because

the Lord God almighty, in His omnipresence, and the Lamb are there. There is no sun or moon because the glory of God illuminates it, and the Lamb is its lamp. The church of Christ will enjoy its beauty, and the kings of the earth will come with their tributes to the Lord. The “nations” that is referred to in this passage are the glorified saints, like John talked to us about in verse 5:9; those **“out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,”** and in 7:9; the **“great multitude, which no one is able to number, out of every nation and tribes and peoples and tongues.”** The “kings of the earth” is used in connection to this verse to convey the idea that not all the powers of the earth were won for Satan, but that the Lamb too, won many of their numbers for Himself. Great and powerful persons with their wide influence in all the various departments of life on the old earth bring their glory into the city to give tribute to God and the Lamb. All of these are in eternal union with God and the Lamb. When the use of the material Sanctuary was at an end, the Sanctuary and the Lamb were in God’s heaven, altogether removed from the old earth. Now, after the earth is new and united to God’s heaven, the eternal union, which the Sanctuary once represented, is in effect. Now the Lord God, the almighty, is this city’s Sanctuary, He and the Lamb. The eternal union is immediate and absolutely complete. God and the Lamb are not a Sanctuary in the center of this city, to which those in the city must go to in order to commune with them. The whole city is the Sanctuary, the whole city is filled with their glorious presence, God and the Lamb are the Sanctuary, and we are in union with them, a union to which nothing can be added in all eternity. The glory of God is God Himself in all His radiant attributes; this glory fills the entire city with its uncreated light; so too, this glory applies to the Lamb. Those who dwell in this city walk by this light. All its fullness ever surrounds them in their eternal union with God and the Lamb. Those who are in this city, in this eternal, exalted union, are called His “nations.”

This complete restoration to peace, fullness, wholeness, and well-being is possible only because Jesus, by His death, dealt with the cause of the world’s trouble, sin. He bore God’s judgment on sin, so that the divine hostility against sin might be removed and repentant sinners might have peace with God; ***Col. 1:19-22; For it was the Father’s good pleasure (or, all the fullness pleased to dwell), for all of the fullness (or fullness of deity) to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven (or the heavens). And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach—***Verses like these should give us peace of mind knowing that not only are we at peace with God through His grace but He did everything that was possible and necessary to accomplish reconciliation with Him in spite of our times of rebellion toward Him. So we should amplify these verses to get the fullness of meaning and appreciation for all that He has done for us and for all that He is: *Because the Father was well-pleased and thought that it was with good understanding that not only was what He did good and right for*

the plenitude of His fullness to reach its intended goal of attaining to the stature and state of man to dwell in Christ Jesus, but He also has the willingness and the freedom of resolve in regards as to what is perfect and what is good, and by Him He has restored a relationship of peace between Him and man which had been disturbed, having brought about the cessation of hostilities by the life and blood of Christ offered as an atonement on His Roman cross on which He was crucified, and I say this includes all the things of all that we can achieve in the universe and all of what can be achieved in heaven. And although you at one time entirely alienated yourself from Him and hated and rejected Him in your mode of thinking, feelings, affections, and disposition of your mind and engaged yourself in a spiritually immoral lifestyle, yet He restored the relationship of peace that was once disturbed between Him and us in the physical part of His body incarnate, through His violent death that he suffered as a punishment for our sin, in order for us to be set before Him as one set apart, sanctified, and consecrated as a saint, absent of internal blemishes and free from any legal charge against us. The fullness of the Godhead always dwelt in Christ. The word for *dwell* here means to dwell permanently, and not to just merely visit temporarily. It was not only the Godhead's good pleasure that all fullness should dwell in Christ, but also that Christ should reconcile all things to Himself. There are two reconciliations mentioned in these verses; the reconciliation of things and the reconciliation of persons. The first is still future, whereas the second is past for all of those who believe in Christ. One of the purposes of the death of Christ was to make possible reconciliation of persons and things to God. In order to do this, He had to remove the cause of enmity and alienation. This He effectively did by settling the sin question to God's entire satisfaction. The scope of reconciliation is indicated in Colossians 1, as follows (1) all who believe on the Lord Jesus are already reconciled to God (v-21). Although Christ's reconciling work is sufficient for all mankind, it is only effective for those who avail themselves of it. (2) Eventually all things will be reconciled, whether things on earth or things in heaven (v-20). This refers to the animal creation, and to inanimate things that have been defiled by sin. However, it does not refer to Satan, to the other fallen angels, or to unbelieving man. Their eternal doom is clearly pronounced in the Scriptures. Paul reminds the Colossians, and thus reminds us, that reconciliation in their case was already an accomplished fact. Before their conversion, the Colossians had been Gentile sinners, alienated from God and enemies of His in their minds because of their wicked works, ***Eph. 4:17-18; Thus I say therefore, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart.*** They desperately needed to be reconciled, and the Lord Jesus Christ, in His matchless grace, has taken the initiative. He reconciled them in the body of His flesh through death. It was not by His life but through His death. The expression "the body of His flesh" simply means that the Lord effected reconciliation by dying on the cross in a real human body, not as a spirit being. Compare ***Hebrews 2:14-16; since then children***

share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. For assuredly, He does not give help to the angels, but He gives help to the descendants of Abraham. Here Christ's incarnation is declared a necessity in order to effect redemption. The wonderful result of this reconciliation is expressed in the words ***"to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight."*** What marvelous grace, that ungodly sinners can be delivered from their past evil life and conveyed into such a realm of blessing! The full efficacy of Christ's reconciliation with regard to His people will be seen in a coming day when we are presented to God the Father without sin, stain, or any charge against us, and when, as worshippers, we shall gladly acknowledge Christ as the Worthy One, ***Rev. 5:12; Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.***

When people, through God's grace, have peace with God, they also have peace with one another. They become members of the kingdom of God, where all disharmony and injustices are removed, whether in matters of race, sex, or status. Christians should preach this gospel of peace to others, though they realize that at times it may cause division; for while some will gladly accept it, others will violently oppose it. In spite of this, Christians must do all they can to help people in general to live together peacefully.

Not only do Christians have peace *with* God through Christ, they also have the peace *of* God through Christ. That peace does not mean that they will have a trouble free life. Rather it means that they now enjoy a state of spiritual wholeness and well-being that gives them strength and a calmness even in the midst of suffering and trials, ***Gal. 5:22; But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.*** The conclusion that I have drawn from this study is that the depth of true peace that I desire or experience in my life comes from and is directly proportional to, the depth of my belief and willingness to accept that God has reconciled my sin issues. Only, in my times of prideful unbelief, does anything come between me and my capacity of enjoying the full depth of the peace that Jesus Christ desires to give to me. When I am not experiencing God's full dose of peace in my life it is because I have let myself perceive things, issues, and conditions through sin tainted influences.