

## GOD

### Claiming God's Peace

One of the great blessings that we as children of God in today's Grace Administration can enjoy is **peace** in our lives. This peace is **not** "world peace," which we know will never be available in our day and time no matter what people say and do. **Instead**, it is a peace that only **God** can provide.

E. W. Bullinger's *Critical Lexicon and Concordance* defines **peace** as "rest, in contrast to strife...a state of untroubled, undisturbed well-being." The only **true** peace is that which comes from **God**. We can **claim God's peace** no matter what the worldly circumstances. As we do, our **minds** can be at rest and in a state of untroubled, undisturbed well-being no matter what's happening around us and no matter what attacks the adversary may be throwing at us.

In the Bible, the **Hebrew** word for peace used in the Old Testament is *shalom*, meaning peace or completeness. The corresponding **Greek** word used in the Gospels and New Testament is *eirēnē*. We'll take a look at a few of the usages of these two words in God's Word to get a better appreciation of what this peace is that is available for us to claim.

First, let's take a look at a familiar verse, **Isaiah 26:3**:

#### Isaiah

**26:3** **Thou wilt keep *him* in perfect peace, whose mind *is stayed on thee*: because he trusteth in thee.**

The words "**perfect peace**" in the Hebrew are actually a repetition of the word *shalom*, reading "**peace, peace**." This is a figure of speech called **epizeuxis**, or **repetition**, in which a word is **repeated** for emphasis. By repeating the word "peace," the emphasis is on that **peace**. This is **also** an example of the figure of speech **antimeria**, the use of a **noun** repeated **in place of** an **adjective**, in order to express the adjective in the **highest** degree. God used **two** figures of speech to call our attention to this **peace**, which can be understood as "**great** peace" or, as stated in the King James Version, "**perfect** peace." Peace doesn't get any better than that!

**Who** gets this perfect peace? In the **King James Version**, it says "**whose mind *is stayed on thee*: because he trusteth in thee**." Notice that the **first** words "***on thee***" are in **italics**: they were **added** and are **not** in the text. If you leave out these added words, **and** ignore the punctuation (which also was not in the text), this verse reads: "Thou wilt keep *him* in perfect peace **whose mind is stayed because he trusteth in thee**." Indeed, in the **New International Version**, this verse reads: "You will keep in perfect peace **him whose mind is steadfast**, because he trusts in you." The **New American Standard** version renders this verse: "The **steadfast of mind** you will keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in you."

So, this verse is telling us that this "perfect peace" is available to one whose mind is "**stayed**," or as the NIV and NAS say, "**steadfast**." The word "stayed" is from a Hebrew word that is **also** translated "to be **established**."

To have a **stayed mind**, one that is established or steadfast, is to have your mind **focused**, **committed** to God, allowing **nothing** to distract you from this mindset. We'll return to this verse, but let's take a quick look at **Chapter 50, verse 7**:

**50:7 For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.**

To “**set one's face like a flint**” is a figure of speech indicating that one's **mind** is **established, stayed**. Only then can we know that we will **not** be “confounded” (confused, perplexed, or ashamed); only then can we have that perfect peace. Let's **return** to **26:3**:

**26:3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.**

When we **trust in God**, our minds can be **stayed**, established, and we can have **perfect peace**. God wants us to **trust in Him**. We see this in the next verse:

**26:4 Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength:**

The word “**trust**” in these verses can also be understood as “**confide**.” As we confide in God, we can be secure and without fear. **Then**, we can have that perfect peace.

Let's look at a few other Old Testament usages of the word “**peace**” to gain a greater understanding of this peace available from God as we stay our minds:

#### **Psalms**

**4:8 I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.**

The word “**safety**” here is from a Hebrew word for “**confidence**” or “**trust**.” When we have confidence or trust in God, we can have **peace**, and we can enjoy restful sleep.

#### **Psalms**

**29:11 The Lord will give strength unto His people; the Lord will bless his people with peace.**

“**Peace**” here can be understood as “**the peace**,” referring to the peace only available from **God**. As God's people are blessed with **His** peace, they can be **strong**.

#### **Psalms**

**37:11 But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.**

Those who are **meek to God's Word** can enjoy an **abundance** of God's peace.

**37:37 Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.**

Also, we see this **peace** available to those who endeavor to live by God's Word in **Psalm 119:165**:

**119:165 Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them (*nothing shall cause them to stumble*).**

In this verse, the word "**peace**" is the figure of speech **synecdochē**, in which the word "peace" is used for **every blessing** we can enjoy that is connected with **peace**. You may recall that **Ephesians 1:3** tells us that God has blessed us with **all spiritual blessings** in the heavenlies in Christ. We then definitely can have God's **peace**.

In Old Testament usages, peace is associated with **righteousness**. Only when one strived for righteousness by endeavoring to live and do God's Word could one truly experience this peace. We see this in **Isaiah 32:17**:

### Isaiah

**32:17 And the work (*tillage*) of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.**

To have **peace** is to have **quietness** and **confidence**, so the **repetition** of the word "righteousness" here **establishes** that this peace would be a result of a person's being **righteous**.

In **Old Testament times**, a person needed to strive to keep the Old Testament Law to be reckoned as **righteous**, and we know that **Jesus Christ** was the **only** one who was able to perfectly fulfill that Law. His **accomplishments** made **God's perfect peace** readily available, as we see in the Gospel of **John chapter 14, verse 27**:

### John

**14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.**

Jesus Christ referred to the **peace** he made available as "**my peace**." **Isaiah 9:6** refers to the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ, as "**the Prince of Peace**," a figure of speech for "the Prince **who gives** peace." This peace, made available by the accomplishments of Jesus Christ, is **not** any kind of "peace" from **the world**, but is the **perfect peace of God**.

Look at **Chapter 16, verse 33**:

### John

**16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome (*conquered*) the world.**

There is **no** true peace from **the world**, from people who live according to the realm of the senses. **True peace** was made available by **the accomplishments of Jesus Christ**.

So, we see that Jesus Christ came to make **true** peace, **God's perfect peace**, available. We see this peace referred to in **the Church Epistles**, written to us in today's Administration of Grace. Look at **Romans, Chapter 2:**

### Romans

**2:10** But glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew (*Judean*) first, and also to the Greek (*Gentile*);

**2:11** For there is no respect of persons (*partiality*) with God.

Peace is available to us once we are **born again** of God's spirit.

### Romans

**5:1** Therefore being justified by faith (*believing*), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

**5:2** By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

We have **peace** with God because once we were born again we were reconciled to God and are no longer at enmity with Him. We are now **righteous** in His sight. We can now benefit from that **perfect peace** that God made available.

### Romans

**8:6** For to be carnally minded *is* death; but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace.

We can enjoy peace when we are "**spiritually minded**" – when we put God's Word in our minds and act accordingly. As we do this we are **renewing our minds** to God's Word. **Romans 12:2** tells us "be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." **Rather** than being "**conformed to the world**," living according to the senses realm where **no** true peace is available, we **renew our minds** and enjoy **God's true peace**.

### Romans

**14:17** For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost (*in holy spirit*).

**Matthew 6:33** says "But seek ye first **the kingdom of God**, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." So, the **true peace** from God is available as we "seek the Kingdom of God." We keep our thoughts on God's Word, and trust in Him to take care of us. You might recall that in **Matthew Chapter 6** Jesus Christ admonished his listeners to "**take no thought**" for such necessities as food and clothing. The words "**take thought**" are from the Greek word *merimnaō*, which can be better understood as having **anxiety** or **undue concern**. Jesus was stating that **God** knows what we need, so rather than having undue concern or anxiety about getting things, we should "seek first the kingdom of God," and we saw in **Romans 14:17** that **then** we can have **peace**.

This brings us to the question: **How** can we, in our day and time, “seek first the kingdom of God” so we can **claim** that **perfect peace** that God by His grace made available through the accomplishments of Jesus Christ? We see the answer in **Philippians, Chapter 4**:

### Philippians

**4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.**

The word “**careful**” is from the **same** Greek word that was rendered “**take thought**” in Matthew Chapter 6, and can best be understood here as “**anxious**.” We are **not** to be **anxious** about **anything**. **Instead** of being anxious, we **go to God**, our loving heavenly Father. This verse contains three words related to **prayer** that show us **how** to do this.

**Prayer**, from the Greek word *proseuchē*, according to the *Companion Bible* refers to prayer offered to God, having regard to the **power** of Him who is invoked and giving prominence to **personal devotion**. We go to God, recognizing **His great power** as the almighty God and His **ability to do**. **Supplication**, from the word *deēsis*, refers to a **petition** for a special object, having regard to **our necessity** rather than God’s sufficiency to supply it, giving prominence to **personal need**. We have a **need**, so we go to **God** to get that need met.

We **pray** to God and make our **petition** to get our need met with **thanksgiving**, making our **requests** known to Him. The word “**requests**” in this verse is *aitēma*, referring to a specific petition for a particular thing. We see this word *aitēma* in **I John Chapter 5, verses 14 and 15**: “And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the **petitions** that we desired of him.” In those verses, the word “**petitions**” is from the same word translated “**requests**” in Philippians 4:6. We have **confidence** (**boldness** in the text), because we know that God hears us and **will** grant our petitions.

We make our **requests** known to God by **prayer** and **supplication**, knowing that He will supply our need (**Philippians 4:19**). When we do this, we **won’t** be anxious about anything. Then, we can have that perfect **peace**, as we see in **verse 7**:

**4:7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through (in) Christ Jesus.**

The words “**peace of God**” are a figure of speech (Genitive of Possession), emphasizing that **God** is the **source** of this peace. You can read it: “the peace which comes from **God**.” Bullinger’s book *Figures of Speech used in the Bible* describes this “peace of God” as “God’s peace; the peace which reigns in His presence, where the end is known from the beginning, producing a peace which nothing can therefore disturb.” Since God is all-knowing, **nothing** can surprise or disturb Him, so **His** peace is **perfect**. Bullinger **continues** by explaining: “It is the unknown future which disturbs **our** peace; but if our requests are made known to **God**, we need **not** be full of care about **anything**; and something of **God’s** **peace** will keep and **guard** our hearts and minds.” **Verse 7** tells us that this “perfect peace of God” is beyond all human comprehension.

As we go to God in prayer and give our cares to Him, we are **not** anxious and can then **focus** on putting God's Word on in our minds and acting accordingly. We see what things to **dwell** on and the great **benefit** that results in the next two verses:

**4:8** Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.

Here we see a list of **eight** things (Biblically, **8** is the number for **new beginning**) we are to **dwell on**: each one of these refers to an aspect of **God's Word**.

**4:9** Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

As we keep God's Word in our minds and act accordingly, we enjoy the great peace of God. The phrase "**God of peace**" is another figure of speech, this time the **Genitive of Origin**, emphasizing God as the one who is **the source** of peace: "the God who has made peace and **gives** peace." And God, our source of this peace, is "**with**" us. The word "**with**" here is from a Greek word meaning "**in company with**" or "**in companionship with**." God is our loving heavenly Father who has a personal relationship with us, His children, as our supply of peace.

So, we can **claim** the perfect **peace** that only **God** can make available. No matter what our needs, and no matter what the circumstances, we can go to our heavenly Father, make our requests known to Him, and then, as we dwell on and act on His word rather than allowing any anxiety, we can claim and enjoy that perfect peace. **Galatians 5:22** tells us that **peace** is one of the **fruit of the spirit**.

Let's conclude by looking at **Colossians Chapter 3, verse 15**, which admonishes us what to **do** with this perfect peace that we can claim:

### Colossians

**3:15** And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body: and be ye thankful.

In six of the seven Critical Greek Manuscripts, this verse reads "the peace of **Christ**," referring to **God's perfect peace** made available by **the accomplishments of Jesus Christ**. Once we **claim** God's perfect peace, we are to let it "rule," or "preside" or "umpire" in our hearts, the seat of our personal life. As this peace rules in our hearts and lives, it impacts the **Body of Christ**, strengthening the household in which we belong.

We have seen that, through the accomplishments of Jesus Christ, **God's perfect peace** is available to **us**. We just need to claim it.

- Dr. Rick Batt