

Christmas Series: “Prince of Peace”

Part One: December 10, 2017

Isaiah 9:6-7 (NLT)

“For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His government and its peace will never end. He will rule with fairness and justice from the throne of his ancestor David for all eternity. The passionate commitment of the Lord of Heaven’s Armies will make this happen!”

In The Bible, “Peace” refers to more than just the absence of war or conflict- it also means the presence of something better in its place.

OT word for Peace- Shalom (Hebrew)

Greek word for Peace- Eirene

Shalom meaning: COMPLETE or WHOLE

Ex. Shalom Stone- **Joshua 8:31**, or a stone wall without gaps and not missing any bricks.

Shalom refers to something that’s complex, with lots of pieces, that’s in a state of completeness or wholeness.

Job 5:24- Job’s tents were Shalom because nothing in his flocks were missing.

Refers to one’s well-being when David visited his brothers on the battle field and asked how their Shalom was?

The core idea behind Shalom is that life is complex and full of many moving pieces, responsibilities and relationships and when any of them are out of proper alignment or missing, your Shalom breaks down and your life is no longer whole- it needs to be restored.

That’s the basic meaning when Shalom is used as a verb; when you bring Shalom you make complete or RESTORE.

So Solomon brings Shalom to the unfinished temple when he completes it. **(1 Kings 9:25)**

Exodus 22:4 says if your animal does something to ruin your neighbors property you Shalom them by giving them a complete repayment for their loss. You take what's missing and you restore it to wholeness.

The same goes for human relationships. In the Book of Proverbs, to reconcile and heal a broken relationship is to bring Shalom. **(Proverbs 16:7)**

When rival kingdoms in The Bible would make Shalom it didn't only mean that they would stop fighting, it meant that they would actually begin working together for each other's benefit. This is the kind of Shalom that Israel's kings were supposed to cultivate, but it rarely happened.

This leads us to the prophet Isaiah's words in Isaiah 9 where he looked for a future king, a prince of Shalom, who would bring about a Shalom that would never end. A time when God would make a covenant of Shalom with His people and make right all that's been broken.

This is why Jesus' birth in the NT is announced as the arrival of Eirene, again, the Greek word for Peace. Jesus came to offer his Peace to others. Ex. "My Peace I give to you all." **(John 14:27)**

The disciples claimed that Jesus MADE PEACE between sinful humans and God when Jesus died and then rose from the grave. **(Romans 5:1)**

The idea in all this is that he restored to wholeness the relationship between humans and their creator. This is why the apostle Paul can say "Jesus is our Peace (Eirene)." **(Ephesians 2:14-15)** Jesus was the whole complete human I was made to be but have failed to be but now he gives me His life as a gift.

This means that Jesus' followers are now called to CREATE PEACE. Paul instructed local churches to keep their unity through the bond of peace which requires HUMILITY, PATIENCE & LOVE. Becoming people of Peace means participating with Jesus in His life, "who reconciled all things in heaven and earth, making peace through the blood of His cross." (Death & Resurrection) **(Colossians 1:19-20)**

So PEACE takes a lot of work! Because it's not just the absence of conflict, true peace

means taking whatever is broken in our lives and restoring it to wholeness; whether it's in our lives, relationships or our world. This is the rich biblical concept of Peace.