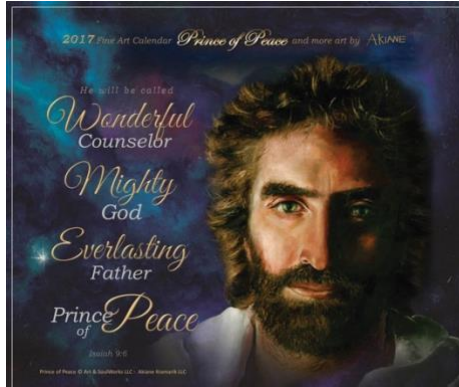


JESUS OUR **TSAR SHALOM** – PRINCE OF PEACE - 2018

PLEASE STAND WITH ME AS WE READ OUR SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY



⁶ For unto us a Child is born,
Unto us a Son is given;
And the government will be upon His shoulder.
And His name will be called
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (**Tsar Shalom**)

⁷ Of the increase of His government and peace
There will be no end,
Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom,
To order it and establish it with judgment and justice
From that time forward, even forever.

The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this. (Isaiah 9:6-7, NKJV).

This morning we're going to talk about peace. We're going to talk about something called **shalom** (true peace, GOD'S kind of peace) on two levels:

1. The peace we can experience in our relationship with others, and within ourselves.
2. The peace we can experience in our relationship with God.

We will see how the world offers false alternatives to find peace. We will see how very far that concept falls short of what God means for each and every one of us. As we look at peace/shalom we will see that in the Hebrew language it is all about restoration. It is the taking of something broken and allowing God to fix it. In the end, it is about being so restored to Him that we willingly ask Him to do His perfect will in our lives. This is the laying aside of our own rights and desires and clinging to Him knowing, believing and accepting that His will is best for us. In that submission and obedience we experience perfect **shalom**.

As I have said so many times, men and women have 3 basic needs. When we or others try to meet these needs with anything but God the end is always frustration and conflict. This frustration and conflict steals our **shalom**. Wrongs we have experienced in our past continue to rob us of not only peace but also of joy. The result is that we go through life hurting others, often unknowingly. It is only when we choose to forgive that father, mother, spouse, child, or person who has hurt us that we are healed and can experience joy and **shalom**.

This peace that God desires for us is not a peace that the world has or can understand. Some of us who are older in this room remember John Lennon wishfully singing, "All we are saying.....is give peace a chance." He then released a song called "Imagine" in 1972. Lennon laid down the lyrics imagining how the world could be at peace without all the things that, in his mind, bring war and violence: heaven, hell, religion, countries, etc.

Sadly, the evidence shows that any society, commune, or political system that has tried to enact Lennon's peaceful wish for mankind has ALWAYS ended in frustration and conflict. It has always reduced the dignity and worth of the individual and has led to violence and death. We need only study the history of the Soviet Union, Communist China, Cuba, and the latest so-called utopia we are witnessing in Venezuela.



In Venezuela zoo animals and pets are starving, and young mothers and wives are selling their hair and their bodies to try to find anything for their children to eat. This misery is born in the ideals of "peace" that the world offers. It is no peace. It ALWAYS results in oppression, personal denigration, and behavior that is anti-God and anti-Torah.

Why is it that mankind cannot get it right? Why is it that we're so needy for peace and we just can't get it? We try this. We try that. And still, we have no peace. We can land a man on the moon, and we still can't figure out how to have peace in our lives. In this age, we are not alone. Mankind throughout all of history has never been able to produce the wellness, wholeness, and sense of well-being that we all long for. Peace seems to mean a lot of things to a lot of people, but Jesus was very specific in communicating that peace in Him is like no other. It is different. It is other-worldly. Scripture tells us that it surpasses all human understanding. But what is it and how do we get it? Christ said, *"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, neither let it be afraid."* (John 14:27, NKJV).

To begin to have a basic understanding of peace, we must delve into the the Jewish biblical concept of peace. It is distant from our western concept of peace. Real peace, God's peace, is encapsulated in the concept of "*shalom*." For the western mind, peace pretty much means the absence of conflict, but the eastern mind, the Jewish mind, the biblical mind has a concept of peace a thousand times fuller than anything the world has ever conceived of.



What is *shalom*? In English we say "Peace," but what really is Shalom?

The ancient Hebrew concept of peace is expressed in the word "shalom," meaning: wholeness, completeness, soundness, health, safety and prosperity, carrying with it the implication of permanence.

Shalom comes from the root word shalom (שלום). This word means “to make whole or complete”, “to restore.” Hebrew is lovely in that the meaning of root words are carried into their derivative words. There is sort of a literary DNA that flows from the root into all related words. Hence, the word *shalom*, “to restore” is embedded into the meaning of the word Shalom or “peace.” So, what is this business of restoration all about?

Brokenness is what takes the peace out of our lives. Brokenness can be a bit confusing because it can be caused by different things. It might be due to:

- 1-Natural events beyond our control (perhaps we blame God for an illness, etc)
- 2-Traumatic events that others have caused us (other people have abused us, or hurt us deeply)
- 3- Events or hurt that we ourselves have caused others.
- 4- Lastly, harm we do to ourselves.

The results of any of these are brokenness perhaps between God and ourselves, between us and others, an even within our own spirit or soul. Jesus promised us peace unlike anything the world can give us. He has forgiven us each for our wandering hearts and for our sinful acts. Shalom requires us to: admit our own failings and agree with God concerning our own sinful hearts, 2) extend forgiveness to others whether they deserve it or not, and 3) forgiving ourselves for the weird and stupid stuff we get caught up in. Give these to God. Get back in the game! Trust Him with your past, your present, and your future. **WITHOUT FORGIVENESS YOU WILL NEVER EXPERIENCE THE PEACE HE DESIRES FOR YOU!**

The connotation of the word restoration or to make whole is that something that was broken is back to being made whole. If you think about it for a minute, most of the turmoil in our lives is based in something being “broken.” It might have been an abusive father who broke not only your spirit but he damaged your soul. It might have been a demanding mother who was never pleased with anything you ever did. Or, it might have been a spouse or partner who broke your ability to trust not only others but yourself. Control is almost always present in unhealthy relationships. The abusive mind says, “I will control you so you will make me feel loved and accepted. I will control you and manipulate you so I will feel that I have value and worth.” This creates horrific brokenness that cries out to be set right...to restore the damaged person to the place where God wants him or her to be. This brokenness can just as easily be our own doing. Anytime we try to fill these desperate needs with ANYTHING but God it ALWAYS results in frustration and conflict. We put unreasonable expectations on our spouses, our friends, our parents, our children, or even God. The power of shalom begins with forgiveness. You will NEVER experience shalom until you can forgive. Those who need to be forgiven may not deserve to be forgiven, but you must forgive them to get beyond them.

Think about this for a minute: Frustration and conflict are the exact opposite of *shalom*. This deep intense desire to be loved and accepted can sometimes result in us looking for love in all the wrong places.

Pursuit of love and acceptance and value and worth by personal achievement or affirmation of others builds up scar tissue on our souls. What does scar tissue do? It makes the wounded part insensitive. It can no longer feel things normally and naturally. It makes it difficult to hear the Holy Spirit of God. This underlying illness produces all sorts of symptoms. It may be a person who starts with white lies or simply lies that help them to cope with the insanity of a dysfunctional family. They tell lies to themselves and others just to cope. Others are so frustrated that they become anger-holics who get high by yelling at others. They are addicted to the adrenalin that comes with shouting, hollering, or controlling others. Some are so desperate for love and acceptance that they fill their lives with a string of one night stands where they repeatedly give themselves physically to another person only to have their soul crushed time and again by rejection.

Scar tissue on the soul builds up. Sensitivity is lost. In time, they forget what love really even feels like. Symptoms of this desperation include addiction to pornography. With repeated indulgence in pornography, the scar tissue on the soul eventually causes a man to see a woman's body not as a precious gift from the Lord, but rather as an inanimate object for sexual release. In time the whole man/woman experience becomes jaded and a pitiful reflection of what it was all meant to be. It is Satan's imitation of real love, godly love. Likewise in the desperate search for personal peace, others turn to alcohol and drugs to distract themselves from facing the demons of their past or the emptiness of their present. Believers are often shocked when I say that alcohol, drugs, and pornography aren't the problem, they are the symptoms of something desperately broken in a person's soul. Remember, the desire to use any person or thing to feel loved or accepted or have value and worth outside of Jesus is sin. It just won't get you there. The drive to meet those needs outside of God will absolutely, definitely, and always rob you of *shalom*. Without *shalom*, there is no joy. The path to shalom is not through these counterfeits, but rather through forgiveness.

Brokenness. Strife. Destruction. Hopelessness. These begin to replace the beautiful wholeness, soundness, and sanity that God meant for each and every one of us. Remember Jesus' primary objective after bringing us to salvation? He said, *"I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."* (John 10:10b, NKJV). Paul describes part of that abundant life to the young pastor Timothy. *"⁷ For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."* (2 Timothy 1:7 NKJV).

I think the reality of true peace, true shalom, is all about an internal work. Let's meditate again on what Jesus said to us, *"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, neither let it be afraid."* (John 14:27, NKJV). Jesus is saying, *"shalom...restoration back to wholeness I leave with you. My shalom, restoration back to wholeness I give to you; not as the world gives you."* The world cannot and will not restore us back to wholeness or anything else for that matter.

This is an internal work through Jesus whose death on the cross cleanses us from all unrighteousness. It is inviting Him and allowing Him to do "heart surgery" on us so to speak. In receiving His forgiveness we gain the spiritual capacity to forgive those who have harmed us. He does a work in our hearts which becomes evident in our changed lives and altered behavior. As we receive His forgiveness, we must extend it to those who have harmed us so.

Jesus Himself said, “Blessed are the peacemakers (those who restore) for theirs is the Kingdom of God.” That means those believers who understand and experience restoration with God and others are there! They are Kingdom living! They are living on a whole new graduated spiritual plane.

Peace is temporary. Shalom is permanent.

Peace can be negative (ie. Lack of conflict). Shalom is a positive.

Peace can be partial. Shalom is whole.

Attaining peace

Peace, lasting peace, shalom transcends the situations and flaws of our own personal lives because it doesn't come from us. It comes from God. We are not in a position to attain peace ourselves. Yet, God promises all the qualities of shalom – wholeness, completeness, soundness, health, safety – to those who will look to Him. Receive His forgiveness for the wrongs you have done. Then, extend that same forgiveness to those who have hurt you.

The prophet Isaiah wrote, “*You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you. Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD himself, is the Rock eternal.*” (Isaiah 26:3–4, NIV). Trusting in God means recognizing Him and giving Him His rightful place in our lives. We must also accept the agent of peace He has provided. And who is that agent of peace? Isaiah tells us.

“*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*” (Isaiah 9:6, NIV). The Prince of Peace, the Tsar Shalom, and better still, the Prince of Restoration.

How was the Messiah to bring peace? Isaiah explains further in the 53rd chapter: “Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.” ([Isaiah 53:4–5](#))¹

Are you willing today to accept the One who can bring you shalom?

Let us pray.

¹ <https://jewsforjesus.org/publications/issues/issues-v01-n10/what-is-shalom-the-true-meaning/> “What is Shalom: The Perfect Peace” by Susan Perlman

Union Grove is one of the oldest Baptist communities of faith in the State of Texas dating back to 1844. Pastor Faber McMullen may be reached by email at uniongrove362@gmail.com or by snail mail at: 15301 FM 362, Navasota, Texas 77868. Tel: 936-825-1227 (Edited and proofed by Amanda Fryday Neese- Webster, Texas.) All financial gifts to this ministry are tax-deductible as a 501 (c) (3) Corporation.