

Jehovah Shalom Notes

What are we to do when we are worried, troubled, distressed, afraid?

Run to Jehovah Shalom, God Who is Peace. **CRY OUT** to the One Who...

[Mk 4:39](#) "[rebuked](#) the wind and said unto the sea, [Peace](#), be [still](#) and the wind [ceased](#) and there was a great calm. (KJV).

The NASB translates is as - "*it became perfectly calm*". Cannot Jehovah Shalom speak the same words today to our restless hearts and minds, tossed here and there by winds of fear, anxiety, distress, affliction, etc? You already know the answer to this rhetorical question. The answer of course is that **"HE IS ABLE"** as the writer of Hebrews so eloquently phrases it...

Hebrews 2:18 (see note) For since He Himself was (tested, tried) in that which He has suffered, HE IS (continuously) [ABLE](#) ([5736](#)) to come to the aid of ("boetheo" = run to one's side upon hearing their **CRY** for help and to give them assistance! See study Jehovah Ezer: The LORD our Helper) those who are (present tense = continuously being) **tempted** (see study peirazo)

AND...

Hebrews 7:25 (see note) "Therefore **HE IS** (continuously) [ABLE](#) also to save forever (KJV = "to the uttermost") those who (continuously, habitually) draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them."

This is your Jehovah Shalom. Know Him as your Peace. Come to Him in Whom alone is perfect peace (shalom, shalom [Isa 26:3](#)). Rest from your laborious anxious thoughts, taking shelter in the Prince of Peace, your Lord Jesus Christ.

In the book of Judges there are 7 cycles which cover 350 years (+/- 50 yr or almost 25% of Israel's history in the OT). Because the sons of Israel did what was right in their own eyes, they did what was evil in the eyes of Jehovah (especially worshipping other so-called gods). Therefore God sold them into bondage and oppression. In their distress they **CRIED OUT** to God (Jdg 3:9; 3:15; 4:5; 6:6; 6:7 see notes Jdg 3:9; 3:15; 4:5; 6:6; 6:7 but see Judges 10:10; 11; 12; 13; 14-notes) Who heard them and delivered them (cf Ps 107:19, 20) - see Spurgeon's comments [Verse 19](#); [Verse 20](#)) by raising up a judge. When the judge died they quickly chose to forsake the great I AM and to sin again and consequently God sold them again into slavery - round and round the cycle went sinking further deeper into depravity (cf Jdg 2:19-note). finally coming to the most vile, despicable description of wickedness in all of Scripture in ([Judges 17-21](#)). When men leave God, the evil they are capable of is unspeakable.

In Jdg 6:10 (note) God says Israel was to fear (not a fear causing one to shrink back but a reverence and awe causing one to bow down) no one but God. In Jdg 6:11 (note) Gideon was threshing wheat in the winepress -- so clearly he was really hiding from Midianite marauders. Given this context, can you imagine how Gideon felt when the **Angel of the LORD** appeared (although note Gideon does not recognize Who He really is initially) and called him "[valiant warrior](#)" (Jdg 6:12 [note] -- "[warrior](#)" is *gibbor* translated "mighty" in "[Mighty God](#)" [Isa 9:6](#)), which is the same description given to David in ([1Sa 16:18](#)). Gideon must have looked around and said "Are you speaking to me?" **Isn't there a little (or lot) of Gideon in all of us?**

God called Gideon *what he would become*, not what he was at the time of this encounter. God has a way of coming to "nobodies" and changing them so that they exalt the only "Somebody" worth exalting. In a similar way, God came to a 99 year old childless man named Abram and declared...

behold, My covenant is with you (Abram) and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be called Abram ("Exalted father"), but your name shall be Abraham ("father of many"); for I will make you the father of a multitude of nations. (Genesis 17:5, 6) (See significance of Name change in covenant)

Our God is an awesome God... while others (or we ourselves) look at us and see our weaknesses, flaws and failures, God looks at us and sees our potential (in Christ). Don't underestimate what God can or will do in and through your life if you are willing to submit to the Refiner's purifying fire (see discussions on "refining" of believers - "I shall come forth as pure gold" - see Job 23:10-note; 1 Peter 1:6; 1:7-see notes 1Pe 1:6; 1:7) and the Master's touch! Remember that God does not save us and use us for what we are but for what by His great mercy and grace we may become. So how was it possible for Gideon to be a "valiant warrior"? The LORD was

with him. And if Jehovah is with you (and He is if you have believed and become a new creation in Christ), you too can be a "valiant warrior" for 1 Jn 4:4 says

"greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world."

Note that before Gideon's eyes are opened to recognize the **Angel of the LORD** as Jehovah Himself, Gideon calls the Angel of the LORD **Adonai** which is a polite term for master, a title of respect. Note that another Name for our Messiah is hidden in Gideon's question -- "if Jehovah is with us" is the Hebrew phrase "**yhw h 'immanu**", the latter phrase reminding us of course of '**Immanuel**' (combination of two words in Hebrew "immanu + 'el), "God with us" (Isa 7:14, 8:8, Mt 1:23).

Judges 6:13 (note) Then Gideon said to him, "O my **lord** (Adonai), if the **LORD** (Jehovah) is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about, saying, 'Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt ?' But now the LORD has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian."

There was the LORD in the form of the **Angel of Jehovah**, in his very midst and yet he is filled with doubts and questions. How we all like Gideon need to have the eyes of our heart enlightened that we might see Him in our midst and His sovereign hand totally in control of every situation in our life (cf Ep 1:17; 1:18; 1:19 **notes** Ep 1:17; 1:18; 1:19, He11:27-note) In Judges 6:22 (note) Gideon has his eyes opened and comes to understand that the **Angel of Jehovah** with Whom he had been speaking "face to face" is actually Jehovah. This encounter caused Gideon to fear for his life (cf Exodus 33:20 God warned Moses ""You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live !") and immediately the LORD calmed his fears speaking

Peace (shalom) to you, do not fear; you shall not die. (see note Judges 6:23)

The first time we see God as Jehovah Shalom, we see it in the circumstance of a man in great fear, his peace disturbed because of the very real circumstances prevailing in Israel at that time. And then when he realizes he has seen God, he thinks he is going to die. His "theology" is unclear -- "if God is for us, then why are we suffering"? But God opens his eyes and he sees that the LORD is peace, the One Who will make Gideon a valiant warrior. In days to come the LORD Who is peace will allow Gideon to experience very distressing circumstances that can take away a man's peace and yet Gideon will be able to remember that God is Jehovah Shalom. If you read the rest of the story you will see he does not lay hold of the truth "perfectly" but he does place his confidence in the the **Lord's promises and provision** and he experiences **victory** in Jehovah Shalom. We too are like Gideon. Fearful, slow to cast ourselves completely upon His steadfast covenant promises and yet despite our faltering steps we find that when we draw near to Him in truth, He is there, drawing nigh unto us (cp James 4:8-note), promising that He will never leave us or forsake us (see Hebrews 13:5-note). He is from everlasting to everlasting our Peace, our Jehovah Shalom. Run by faith into this Strong Tower (see Simple Inductive Study of Proverbs 18:10 - The Name of the LORD is a Strong Tower) when your peace is disturbed and experience His perfect peace (shalom, shalom).

When most of us think about about **peace**, we think about "perfect" circumstances and nothing disturbing our "peace". This is an accurate definition of "peace" only as long as the circumstances are conducive to peace. It is the only "peace" the world knows. But real peace doesn't come from without. Real peace comes from Jehovah Shalom and is an inner work of grace. If you truly know God as Jehovah Shalom, you can still experience His perfect peace in the midst of "troubled waters". Simon and Garfunkel sang a song years ago called "Bridge over troubled waters" and in a sense **Jehovah Shalom** is a believer's "bridge" over troubled waters -- those troubling, disturbing, distressing circumstances that are absolutely real and tangible. And the wonderful truth is that because this peace is not like the world gives but is supernatural, those "troubled waters" can be present (and often are!) and yet you can still experience peace as you recognize and appropriate the truth that Jehovah is your Shalom... Jesus (Jehovah) is your Peace. This recognition and appropriation first involves knowing about it (cf "**peace** be **multiplied** to you in the **knowledge** of God and of Jesus our Lord" see note 2Pe 1:2-note). This process then involves your mind and your heart. It is possible to experience perfect peace in troubling times, because you are crying out to Jehovah Shalom, running into the Strong Tower of that great name and being set securely on high, even in the midst of the whirlwind surrounding you. That's what we are to do when we are distressed, worried, afraid, anxious, or troubled. Set your mind on the things above, where Jehovah Shalom is seated.

In Isaiah 9:6 the context finds Israel is in dire straits, having turned away from the one true God, experiencing anything but inner peace. Yet despite Israel's spiritual harlotry and apostasy, God through Isaiah speaks a beautiful promise and prophecy of the Messiah Jesus, Jehovah Shalom. Click "**He Shall Be Called**" for lyrics and tune of a wonderful chorus based on Isaiah 9:6.

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** (same word translated "warrior" in "valiant warrior") **God**, **Eternal Father**, **Prince of Peace**."

When do we lack peace? Isn't it when we're experiencing adverse circumstances and we think that we have to fix the problem? We take the whole weight of the troubling circumstances onto our shoulders and we try to bear it alone, in our strength, our self-

sufficiency. In [Isaiah 9:6](#), God says to Israel in the midst of her adversity -- your peace is not found in trying to fix your circumstances. Your peace is found in Jehovah Shalom. Not only will the government rest on His shoulders but the burdens and troubles you are experiencing will rest on Him (cf Ps 55:22, Mt 11:28, 29, 30, [Spurgeon](#)). They are not to be upon you, but upon Him. And His name is "[Wonderful Counselor](#)".

When you are anxious, worried, distressed, where do you run for counsel? Who do you run to? Who do you cry out to? It is in those times that we must run to Jehovah Shalom, seeking the mind of God, not the mind of man. Not that we should never go to a counselor. But if that counselor does not lead us to *THE* "Wonderful Counselor", Jehovah Shalom, we can never experience His perfect peace for it is only found in Him. This "Counselor" is also unlike human counselors, for He is the "[El Gibbor-Mighty God](#)", so who and what need you fear? He is "[El Elyon](#)" and He rules over all, including all the circumstances -- whether good or bad -- that come into our lives. And nothing can come into our lives that is not first "filtered" through His fingers of love. He is the "[Eternal Father](#)" always ready with arms open wide (like Calvary's Cross) to receive you in those times of distress. And His throne is always accessible to you so that no matter what distress or difficulty you are experiencing, you can "draw near with confidence to the throne of grace" to "receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (see Hebrews 4:16-note, cf Jer 33:3 [see Spurgeon's devotional on Jer 33:3](#)) In any and every circumstance that comes blowing into your life to upset your peace, you can cry out '[Abba, Father](#)' (see Romans 8:15-note, Gal 4:6) and you can experience genuine peace in His presence even in the face of the storms of life.

As **David** says in Psalm 29:11

The LORD will bless His people with [peace](#) ([Spurgeon](#))

Spurgeon Comments on Psalm 29:11: Power was displayed in the hurricane whose course this Psalm so grandly pictures; and now, in the cool calm after the storm, that power is promised to be the strength of the chosen. He who wings the unerring bolt, will give to His redeemed the wings of eagles; He who shakes the earth with His voice, will terrify the enemies of His saints, and **give His children peace**.

Why are we weak when we have divine strength to flee to? Why are we troubled when the Lord's own peace is ours? Jesus the mighty God is our Peace (see [note](#) Ephesians 2:14) -- what a blessing is this today! What a blessing it will be to us in that day of the Lord which will be in darkness and not light to the ungodly!

Dear reader, is not this a noble Psalm to be sung in stormy weather? Can you sing amid the thunder? Will you be able to sing when the last thunders are let loose, and Jesus judges quick and dead? If you are a believer, the last verse is your heritage, and surely that will set you singing

Jesus is the [Prince of Peace](#), the One Who rules over the kingdom of peace. Isaiah 53:5 reveals another prophecy about the Messiah and shows us how it is only through Jesus our Jehovah Shalom that we might experience perfect peace that passes all understanding.

Isaiah 53:5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our **well-being** (SHALOM – PEACE) fell upon Him, and by His [scourging](#) we are [healed](#). (NIV "the punishment that brought us peace was upon him"). ([Spurgeon's Devotional](#))

The NKJV translates this verse "The chastisement **for** our peace was upon Him" and the NIV somewhat interpretatively as "the punishment that **brought** us peace".

So clearly Messiah's chastening or punishment on the Cross of Calvary, flung wide open the gates into the peace of the kingdom of which He is Prince. And only through faith in this finished work, can any human being ever experience perfect peace. There is no real peace apart from the Prince of Peace, the Lord Jesus Christ. As Jesus taught [Nicodemus](#), one of the most knowledgeable Jewish teachers in Israel "unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3), which is the kingdom of peace ruled by the Prince of Peace.

Unless one believes in the Son, not just intellectually (see study of *pisteuo* = believe) but in such a way that this belief results in an obedient (not perfect) lifestyle (see related discussion of Paul's phrase the **obedience of faith**) , he shall not see life (and peace) but in fact "the wrath of God (quite the opposite of peace) abides on him." (John 3:36). But if a man or woman believes in Jesus, the separation ("[death](#)" -- see Ro 5:12 -note) between man and Holy God that came into the world because of sin, he can finally experience peace with God because "the punishment that brought us peace" (NIV) has fallen on Him. Now we in turn can experience **peace with God** (cf Romans 5:1-note), because the punishment we deserved has been experienced in full by the Lamb of God, the Prince of Peace, Jehovah Shalom.

Ro 5:10 "For [if](#) while we were ([5752](#)) enemies (hateful, odious, hostile, opposed to God), we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." (See on site article [Reconciliation-Enmity to Amity](#))

Reconcile implies a change in relationship from enmity and strife to oneness and harmony. God did not need to be reconciled to man. Man needed to be reconciled to God, so even "while we were [enemies](#)" God initiated the events ("chastisement of our well-being [or peace] fell on Him" Isa 53:5) which made reconciliation possible. Why do we need reconciliation? When sin entered the world (Ge 3:7, 8, 9, 10, 11) it brought spiritual death and separation of sinful man from holy God. Adam and Eve even tried to hide from God and then Adam tried to blame Eve, indicating by both of these actions that there had been a disruption of the perfect peace with God in the perfect setting of Eden. And ever since that rupture of peace, one of mankind's most coveted but illusive desires has been for "perfect peace" once again made possible in Jesus, our Jehovah Shalom.

Jn 16:33 "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."

Where is peace? IN HIM. He is the Prince of Peace, Jehovah Shalom. Why will you have tribulation? If you are a child of God, you will have tribulation "because you are not of the world" and thus "the world hates you" because they hated Him. ([Jn 15:18-19](#)). We must understand that our peace is not found in peaceful circumstances but IN JEHOVAH SHALOM, because He as our substitute received the chastisement we deserved that we might experience His perfect peace (Isa 53:5)

Now, let us reason together... if we desire His peace, it follows that of primary importance, we must fully and intimately be acquainted with the Source of peace, Jehovah Shalom. Eliphaz in seeking to give Job counsel "encouraged" Job to...

Job 22:21 "[Yield](#) ("**know intimately**") now and [be at peace](#) with Him. Thereby good will come to you"

KJV says "**acquaint** now thyself with him and be at peace". Strong's dictionary translates this Hebrew "*show harmony with, be familiar with, know intimately*" and KJV translates it in another verse "*cherish*", all of which convey the picture of "getting to know Him" more and more. How? By understanding His

"Name... is a Strong Tower and the righteous runs into it and are safe." (Pr 18:10, See - God's Names)

By understanding He is Jehovah Shalom. By understanding His character as reflected in His ATTRIBUTES (chart). If you seek "with all your HEART, and with all your SOUL, and with all your MIND, and with all your STRENGTH" (Mk12:30) to acquaint yourself with Him, to know Him intimately, to "cherish" Him, you will begin to experience His perfect peace regardless of the circumstances.

Continuing to reason together how we are to experience His peace, it follows that to acquaint oneself with Him, one must seek Him in His Word and live in obedience to it.

Ps 119:165 **Those who love Thy law have great peace and nothing causes them to stumble.**

Great peace have they which love thy law. What a charming verse is this! It dwells not with those who perfectly keep the law, for where should such men be found? but with those who love it, whose hearts and hands are made to square with its precepts and demands. These men are ever striving, with all their hearts, to walk in obedience to the law, and though they are often persecuted they have peace, yea, great peace; for they have learned the secret of the reconciling blood, they have felt the power of the comforting Spirit, and they stand before the Father as men accepted. The Lord has given them to feel his peace, which passed all understanding. They have many troubles, and are likely to be persecuted by the proud, but their usual condition is that of deep calm -- a peace too great for this little world to break.

And nothing shall offend them, or, "shall really injure them." "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." It must needs be that offences come, but these lovers of the law are peacemakers, and so they neither give nor take offence. That peace which is founded upon conformity to God's will is a living and lasting one, worth writing of with enthusiasm, as the Psalmist here does. ([Spurgeon's comments](#))

Great peace have they which love thy law. Amidst the storms and tempests of the world, there is a perfect calm in the breasts of those, who not only do the will of God, but "love" to do it. They are at peace with God, by the blood of reconciliation; at peace with themselves, by the answer of a good conscience, and the subjection of those desires which war against the soul; at peace with all men, by the spirit of charity; and the whole creation is so at peace with them that all things work together for their good. No external troubles can rob them of this "great peace," no "offences" or stumbling blocks, which are thrown in their way by persecution, or temptation, by the malice of enemies, or by the apostasy of friends, by anything which they see, hear of, or feel, can detain, or divert them from their course. Heavenly love surmounts every obstacle, and runs with delight the way of God's commandments. --George Horne.

Great peace. Note that for "peace" the Hebrew word is **shalom**: it signifies not only "peace," but also perfection, wholeness, prosperity, tranquility, healthfulness, safety, the completion and consummation, of every good thing; and so it is frequently taken by the Hebrews; hence in salutations, wishing one the other well, they say, shalom lekha, i.e, "peace be with thee"; as if one should say, "may all things be prosperous with thee." --Thomas Le Blanc.

Great love to a great law.
Great peace under great disquietude.
Great upholding from all stumblingblocks

The psalmist does not say those who love to obtain "knowledge" about God but those who love His Law. They love God's Holy Word. And because they love God's Word, they saturate themselves with His Word and "meditate on it day and night" ([Joshua 1:8](#)) (Click study on meditation) and find their "[delight](#) is in the law of the LORD" ([Ps 1:2, Spurgeon](#)). The Christian who fills his heart and mind with God's Word will have a "built-in radar" for detecting wrong thoughts. Right thinking is the result of daily meditation on the Word of God.

Isaiah 48:18 "If only you had paid attention to My commandments ! Then your [well-being](#) (KJV - "peace") would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea.

If only you had paid attention to my commandments and done what I said, your peace would have been like a river. Think about how you felt those times you've been next to a peaceful, lazy flowing river. Nothing is more clearly indicated in the Scriptures than that His desires toward all mankind and especially toward His chosen people are desires of good. He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked but only that he turn from his evil way and live (Ezek 33:11). To this end the Scriptures are full of the promise and purpose of peace, as show in Leviticus 26:

Lev 26:3,6: 'If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments so as to carry them out (i.e., obedience)... God would [grant peace](#) in the land, so that you may lie down with no one making you tremble. I shall also eliminate harmful beasts from the land, and no sword will pass through your land.

Isa 32:17 And the work of righteousness will be [peace](#), and the service of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever

Is you know Him, you will know His word. The two are synonymous. The work of righteousness (that's obedience). Remember righteousness is doing what God says is right.

Warren Wiersbe writes the following note regarding the phrase "**The work of righteousness is peace**"

Note that when you are living in obedience to God's commandments, no matter what is going on around you, you can have a peace within, because you are walking in a manner worthy of the Lord to please Him in all respects. Have you been around people who had this quality? There was a serenity about them. Where does it come from? From Jehovah Shalom. "You cannot separate outward action and inward attitude. Sin always results in unrest (unless the conscience is seared), and purity ought to result in peace. "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and peace" (Isa 32:17). "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable" (Jas 3:17). Right living is a necessary condition for experiencing the peace of God. "The peace of God" is one test of whether or not we are in the will of God. "Let the peace that Christ can give keep on acting as umpire in your hearts" (see Colossians 3:15-note, wms). If we are walking with the Lord, then the peace of God and the God of peace exercise their influence over our hearts. Whenever we disobey, we lose that peace and we know we have done something wrong. God's peace is the "umpire" that calls us "out!" (Wiersbe Bible Exposition Commentary)

SEVEN "THIEVES" THAT CAN STEAL YOUR PEACE

(1) EXTERNAL CIRCUMSTANCES IN DISARRAY and/or "OUT OF CONTROL"

What do you do when the circumstances of your life are out of control and your peace is stolen? Let's look at the condition of Jesus' disciples shortly after His crucifixion. In John 20 we find the disciples hiding and fearful much like Gideon in Judges 6. Their Master is dead and with His death it appears all hope for their fledgling movement has vanished. These were external circumstances are out of their control. Into this fearful situation comes Jehovah Shalom... and what did Jesus say to this fearful band?

John 20:19 So when 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." 20 And when He had said this,

He showed them both His hands and His side. The disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord. 21 So Jesus said to them again, **Peace be with you.**; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

When your externals circumstances are out of control and out of *your* control, you need to remember that God's peace is not found in externals but in the presence of Jesus, your Jehovah Shalom. So when those circumstance come and everything looks like it's falling apart, cry out to Jehovah Shalom asking Him to be with you. And then give thanks for His presence and His promise,

Hebrews 13:5, 6 "Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being [content](#) ([PPMPN](#)) with what you [have](#) ([PAPNPD](#)); for He [Himself](#) has [said](#) ([3SRAI](#)) , "I WILL NEVER [DESERT](#) ([1SAAS](#)) YOU, NOR WILL I EVER [FORSAKE](#) ([1SAAS](#)) YOU," and thus we may "[confidently say](#) ([PAN](#)) "THE [LORD](#) IS MY [HELPER](#), I WILL NOT BE [AFRAID](#) ([1SFPI](#)). [WHAT](#) WILL [MAN](#) [DO](#) ([3SFAI](#)) TO ME?". (Spurgeon's devotionals [#1](#), [#2](#))

The **Amplified Version** emphasizes the presence of 5 "negative's" in this promise --

"He [God] Himself has said, I will not in any way fail you nor give you up nor leave you without support. [I will] not, [I will] not, [I will] not in any degree leave you helpless nor forsake nor let [you] down (relax My hold on you)! [Assuredly not!]"

The disciples thought Jesus had left them and they were frightened, but Jesus was there. He had told them He would be resurrected but they had not fully understood and appropriated this truth. He was their Peace in the face of insurmountable odds and an overpowering enemy and He our Source of peace.

In the New Testament the Greek word eirene, "peace," occurs ninety times. In classical Greek this word described a time of rest when there was no war and people lived orderly, tranquil lives. Later the concept of an inner, personal peace was added. In the New Testament the meaning of peace was expanded to include the Old Testament concept of `shalom. Spiritual peace or well-being is based on a person's relationship with God (Rom. 5:1).

The birth of Christ was announced by angels who said, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests" (Luke 2:14). The death of Christ removed the barrier between God and humankind. Paul declared that God reconciled all things to Himself, "by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross" (Col. 1:20; see also Eph. 2:14-18). Christ's resurrection appearances brought greetings and benedictions of peace to the disciples (John 20:19, 21, 26). The gospel itself is defined as "the good news of peace through Jesus Christ" (Acts 10:36; see also Eph. 6:15). Christ left a legacy of peace to His followers (John 14:27; 16:33) and assured them it was their inalienable privilege and possession (Phil. 4:6-7). Paul's common greeting "grace and peace," in each of his thirteen epistles (for example, Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:3) is not simply a wish; it is also a reminder of the gifts Christ grants to believers.

Christians are urged to pray for rulers and work for peace in their communities so that they may enjoy peaceful and quiet lives and be unhindered in proclaiming the gospel of peace (1 Tim. 2:1-2).—DKC

(2) IMAGINATION THAT "RUNS WILD"

Imagination is anything that is not absolute fact. What do you do when the anxiety producing thoughts come?

2Cor 10:3-**note** For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, 4 for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. 5 We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,

We are destroying speculations -- your husband does not come home. You begin to imagine certain things. Your child doesn't come home on time or doesn't call. You begin to imagine he's been run over. He's kidnapped. He's lost. If you don't bring these thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ it just brings torment. You bring that thought to the Lord and you "Philippians 4:8 (note) it" -- is this thought true, honorable, etc? If not then do not think upon it. Then you will have peace.

Philippians 4:6 (Click note) Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Be anxious for nothing means literally to stop being anxious, stop being How? in everything by prayer where the specific word for prayer is *proseuche* which means to look at the CHARACTER OF GOD, at God as He is, His Names, His attributes, His character whereas supplication refers to making specific requests from God. "Proseuche" is the general word for making requests known to the Lord and carries the ideas of adoration, devotion, and worship. Whenever we find our imagination running wild and tearing our mind apart with worry, our first action ought to be to get alone with God and worship and adore Him focusing on His greatness and majesty. It's amazing how problems take on a different perspective. We must realize that El Elyon is in control and can handle our

problems one way or another (see Dan 3:17, 18-note). Too often we rush into the Holy of holies and hastily tell Him our needs, when we ought to approach His throne of grace calmly and in deepest reverence.

Warren Wiersbe comments that...

"Paul counsels us to take "everything to God in prayer." "Don't worry about anything, but pray about everything!" is his admonition. We are prone to pray about the "big things" in life and forget to pray about the so-called "little things"—until they grow and become big things! Talking to God about everything that concerns us and Him is the first step toward victory over worry... remember that Paul was chained to a Roman soldier, guarded day and night. In like manner, "the peace of God" stands guard over the two areas that create worry—the heart (wrong feeling) and the mind (wrong thinking). When we give our hearts to Christ in salvation, we experience "peace with God" (see Romans 5:1-note); but the "peace of God" takes us a step farther into His blessings. This does not mean the absence of trials on the outside, but it does mean a quiet confidence within, regardless of circumstances, people, or things. Daniel gives us a wonderful illustration of peace through prayer. When the king announced that none of his subjects was to pray to anyone except the king, Daniel went to his room, opened his windows, and prayed as before (Da 6:1-10-note). Note how Daniel prayed. He "prayed, and gave thanks before his God" (Da 6:10-note) and he made supplication (Da 6:11-note). Prayer—supplication—thanksgiving! And the result was perfect peace in the midst of difficulty! Daniel was able to spend the night with the lions in perfect peace, while the king in his palace could not sleep (Da 6:18-note)." ([Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor](#))

Offering thanks means that you trust Him that whatever the circumstance, He has allowed it and is in complete control. And then the peace independent of tumultuous circumstances will like a guard stationed at the post keep intruders from entering your heart (emotional) and your mind (volitional) in Christ. There you are in a panic, anxiety virtually freezing you and you cry out to Him and He Himself sets a guard over you, "in Christ Jesus", your Jehovah Shalom standing guard often the racing anxious thoughts trying to penetrate your heart and mind.

Isaiah 26:3-4 "The steadfast of mind Thou will keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in Thee. **Trust** (a command in the original Hebrew) in the LORD forever, **for** ([term of explanation](#) - [What is Isaiah explaining?](#)) in GOD the LORD (= "I Am" which practically can be applied as if God is saying "*I am everything you will ever need in time and eternity!*") , we have an everlasting ([olam](#)) Rock ("a Rock of Ages")

Wrong thinking leads to **wrong feeling**, and before long the heart and mind are pulled apart and we are strangled by **worry**. We must realize that thoughts are real and powerful, even though they cannot be seen, weighed, or measured. We must be

"taking every thought captive ([aichmalotizo](#) in the present tense = continually taking these thoughts captive, something **only** possible as we jettison self-reliance and rely wholly on the Holy Spirit) to the obedience (hupo = under + akouo = hear > "hear under" which conveys picture of listening and submitting to that which is heard = involves a change of attitude of the hearer) of Christ" (2Co 10:5-note).

Sow a thought, reap an action.

Sow an action, reap a habit.

Sow a habit, reap a character.

Sow a character, reap a destiny!

The **Mind is stayed on Thee** in Isaiah 26:3KJV parallels Paul's exhortation in Philippians 4:8 (note) showing that you trust God to be Who He is.

Phil 4:8 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 if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things. 9 The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things; and the God of peace shall be with you. (See notes on Phil 4:8-10)

An imagination run wild is usually a mind filled with anxiety and worry, both of which are to futile and fruitless. Dr. Walter Cavert reported a survey on **worry** that indicated that only 8% of the things people worried about were legitimate matters of concern! The other 92% were either imaginary, never happened, or involved matters over which the people had no control anyway. Satan is the liar (John 8:44), and he wants to corrupt our minds with his lies (2Co 11:3) which cause us to doubt God's immutable (unchangeable) goodness and sovereignty and so he whispers "Yea, hath God said?" which is the same way he approached Eve (Gen 3:1-8). The Holy Spirit controls our minds through truth (John 17:17; 1 Jn 5:6), but the devil tries to control them through lies (cp "fiery missiles from the evil one" Eph 6:16). Whenever we believe a lie, Satan gains a foothold! (See related resources - Mt 6:25-34 - see Jesus' admonition "do not be worried" Mt 6:25ff; See also **Fear, How to Handle It**)

Here are a few facts and quotes on "What is worry?"

Worry...

- ...gives a small thing a big shadow
- ...is the interest we pay on tomorrow's troubles.
- ...over tomorrow pulls shadows over today's sunshine.
- ...is like a rocking chair; it will give you something to do, but it won't get you anywhere.
- ...is an indication that we think God cannot look after us. (O. Chambers)
- ...is putting question marks where God has put periods. (J R Rice)
- ...is the interest we pay on tomorrow's troubles. (E S Jones)
- ...is an intrusion into God's providence. (J Haggai)
- ...is a guest admitted which quickly turns to master.
- ... never robs tomorrow of its sorrow, it only saps today of its strength (A J Cronin)
- ... is the interest paid by those who borrow trouble (G W Lyon)
- ...is practical atheism and an affront to God (R. H. Mounce)

June Hunt writes that...

Worry shifts the focus of attention from the all sufficient power of Christ (cp 2Co 12:9^{[note](#)}) to your human insufficiency and insecurity. Ultimately, worry can undermine your Christian witness by presenting God as impotent and unworthy of praise....A specific characteristic of worry is a negative focus on the future. If you are a worrier, you are spending time speculating on what may or may not happen and then fearing the worst. (Biblical Counseling Keys - Worry: The Joy Stealer)

And just a few more thoughts on Worry:

- Worry is a small trickle of fear that meanders through the mind until it cuts a channel into which all other thoughts are drained.
- Winston Churchill said: Worry is an emotional spasm which occurs when the mind catches hold of something and will not let it go.
- A church sign said: Worry is the darkroom where negatives are developed.
- George Washington reportedly said: Worry is the interest paid by those who borrow trouble.
- Worry is today's mice nibbling on tomorrow's cheese.
- Worry is a complete cycle of inefficient thought revolving around a pivot of fear.
- The American physician, Charles Mayo, called worry the disease of doubt. He said it affects the circulation, the heart, the glands, the whole nervous system. I have never known a man who died from overwork, but many who have died from doubt.
- But the great Christian leader, George Müller, knew the antidote: Many times when I could have gone insane from worry, I was at peace because my soul believed the truth of God's promises.

(3) FAILURE TO BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

Paul gives the church at Ephesus a command, not simply a good suggestion as if it might be a good idea to be filled with the Holy Spirit:

Eph 5:18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation (an abandoned, dissolute life, profligacy, prodigality, portrays utter recklessness in expenditure on part of those who have lost self-control) but **be filled** (present tense = continually, controlled by, permeated with; ^{imperative mood} = a command) with the Spirit, (note what a person controlled by the Spirit looks like) 19 **speaking** to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; 20 always **giving thanks** for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father and 21 and **be subject** (present tense = continually, passive voice, hupotasso click word study) to one another in the fear of Christ. (and then he mentions the actions which are to characterize Spirit controlled wives and husbands) (Ephesians 5:18; 19; 20; 21; 22; 23; 24; See notes Ep 5:18; 19; 20; 21; 22; 23; 24; See also Wayne Barber's excellent series on Ephesians 5:18-21; 5:22-24)

Both wine and the Holy Spirit do their work deep in the human psyche. They affect people below the level of consciousness, down at the foundations of personality. The Spirit is not merely **WITH** God's people but **IN** them and it is God's will that He control us and empower us. Thus God commands believers to be filled with His Spirit. How do you get filled? Note that "filled" is passive voice so you can't conjure this up. It is a work that God does. But He does it to willing vessels. So we must come to Him and seek Him His face, asking Him to control us (filled means controlled as discussed in more detail below). And it flows out. When He fills you. Galatians 5:22 (note) fruit of the Spirit is peace. If you are filled with the Spirit, you have peace.

The idea of **"BEING FILLED"** (see word study on pleroo the Greek word for **filled**) conveyed several thoughts to the Greek hearer.

First, **"being filled"** was often used of the **WIND FILLING A SAIL** and thereby carrying the ship along. To be filled with the Spirit is to be moved along in our Christian life by God Himself, by the same dynamic by which the writers of Scripture were "moved by the Holy Spirit" (see 2Peter 1:21-note).

Second, pleroo carries the idea of **PERMEATION**, and was used of salt's permeating meat in order to flavor and preserve it. God wants His Holy Spirit to so permeate the lives of His children that everything they think, say, and do will reflect His divine presence.

Third, pleroo has connotation of **TOTAL CONTROL**. The person who is filled with sorrow (Jn 16:6) is no longer under his own control but is totally under the control of that emotion. In the same way, someone who is filled with fear (Lk 5:26), anger (Lk 6:11), faith (Acts 6:5), or even Satan (Acts 5:3) is no longer under his own control but under the total control of that which dominates him. To be filled in this sense is to be totally dominated and controlled, and it is the most important sense for believers. To be filled with the Spirit (see Ephesians 5:18-note) is not to have Him somehow progressively added to our life until we are full of Him. It is to be under His total domination and control. In sum, if you cannot be filled with and controlled by both fear (not referring here to godly fear equating with a reverential awe of the thrice holy God) and the Spirit at the same time.

(4) RELATIONSHIPS THAT ARE "BROKEN"

If you are feeling troubled go through Paul's "check list" of "put on's" which may help you discern why your peace has left you. But be careful! Don't see something in this list in which you are deficient and say "I'm gonna fix that one!" Beloved, the attitudes and actions in this list cannot be "worked up" naturally but only supernaturally! That is why [Point \(3\)](#) above is so important. Unless you are filled with (controlled by and empowered supernaturally by) the Holy Spirit, you simply cannot "self manufacture" the qualities in Colossians 3:12-16! If you try, you may have some some term success, but eventually you will fail. And worst of all you will put yourself under a yoke of legalism, trying in vain to bring forth the "fruit" Paul lists. The only way to bear this type of "spiritual fruit" is to stop "trying" and start "dying." Jettison self-reliance and begin to learn to rely wholly on the Holy Spirit to give you BOTH the desire and the power (Phil 2:13NLT-[note](#)) to bring forth this "fruit." (SEE CAVEAT BELOW)

Colossians 3:12 And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. 14 And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. (Col 3:12; 13; 14; 15; 16-See **notes** Col 3:12; 13; 14; 15; 16)

ONE CAVEAT REGARDING THE EXHORTATION - "STOP TRYING AND START DYING" - This statement **DOES NOT** mean that we are to **"Let God and Let God"** which is a false teaching (probably originating from the [Keswick Movement](#))! And so, as an example, the phrase **"stop trying"** means stop trying to live the supernatural life in your natural strength, but in dependence on the Spirit. So does this signify you will do nothing? Does this signify you are a "passive participant" in your [progressive sanctification](#)? Of course not! Paul was very clear that while believers are **totally dependent** on the Spirit of Christ to live a supernatural life, we are also **totally responsible** to work out our salvation -- "So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out** (command in the [present imperative](#) - but even obeying this necessitates the Spirit's enablement described in the next verse) your salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for (strategic [term of explanation](#)) it is God who is at work in you, both to will (desire) and to work *power) for His good pleasure. (Php 2:12+, Php 2:13NLT+).

Let the peace of God rule in your heart= The idea of the Greek word "rule" is to be like an "umpire". Many use this verse for making decisions and that is a possible application of the verse. However from the context Paul is instructing the saints at Colossae that if there is a conflict (unforgiveness, bitterness, etc), they were to let God's peace rule in their heart. Blessed are the peacemakers. Let God's peace umpire. Don't say

"I'm going to give them what they deserve" or

"When they get right with me, then I'll get right with them.", etc

Why not? Because that is not letting peace rule in your heart, but in fact is letting

"sin reign in your mortal body" and is "presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness" (Ro 6:12; 6:13 see notes)

You cannot serve two masters. Broken relationships and a desire to "get even" will steal your peace but

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God (see Mt 5:9-note) (See related discussion on "forgive us as we forgive others"! Think about what we are asking for! See Matthew 6:12, 13, 14-note)

The Greek word for **blessed** (makarios see note) describes those who is in the world yet independent of the world for their satisfaction for their contentment comes from God and not from favorable circumstances. Jesus said

Blessed (makarios see note) are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. (Mt 5:11; 12-see **notes** Mt 5:11; 12).

So "**blessed are you**" does not mean "**untroubled are you**" or "**healthy are you**" or "**admired are you**" or "**prosperous are you**"! It means "between you and God all is well." You are deeply secure, profoundly content, happy in God - even if you are weeping over the pain of a struck body, a perplexed mind, or a heartbreaking relationship. Don't let broken relationships still this blessed state of peace and contentment which are independent of the circumstances.

(5) WHEN YOU ARE NOT IN THE WILL OF GOD

To be in the will of God is to have wisdom from above on how to handle a situation.

James 3:13 Who among you is wise and understanding ? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. 14 But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant boast one's self to the injury of a person or thing) and so lie against the truth. 15 This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. 16 For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. 17 But the WISDOM from above is first pure, then PEACEABLE, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. 18 And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in PEACE by those who make PEACE

Wisdom is knowing how to take truth and apply it to life. **Wisdom** is application of knowledge. **Wisdom** is walking in the truth. **Wisdom** from above is pure, peaceful, etc. When you lack peace it is time to wrestle with the Lord in prayer. In Romans 12:1, 2 (see notes [Romans 12:1](#); 12:2) teaches the will of God is good, acceptable and perfect. When you know that you have the will in your heart which is good and acceptable and perfect, you will have peace.

Remember that for the most part, the **will of God** is revealed in the **Word of God**, so if you are not daily in the **Word of God** (and better yet the Word of God in you! cf [Memorizing His Word](#)) you are increasing the chances of not being in the **will of God**.

See related study on [The Will Of God](#) and [How Can I Know What God Wants Me To Do? - Finding the will of God?](#)

(6) WHEN PEACE LEAVES CHECK TO SEE IF GOD WANTS TO REVEAL SOMETHING

If you have you been "burdened" in your heart, you go to Jehovah Shalom and wrestle with Him. He may have given you this burden so that you pray and intercede.

(7) THERE IS NO PEACE WHEN THERE IS SIN IN YOUR LIFE

Sinners, believing or unbelieving, never have true inner peace, because God makes it very clear that

"There is no peace for the wicked" (Isaiah 57:21).

Confess your sin according to 1Jn 1:9-note (implying a repentance or turning from the sin as in Pr 28:13-note). Nothing that does not bring forth the peaceful fruit of righteousness is worth holding on to. So you must forsake that sin.

When peace leaves you, check yourself:

- 1) Your externals
- 2) Your imaginings

- 3) Your "gas" tank (what are you filled with? Spirit or flesh?)
- 4) Your relationships for any that might be broken
- 5) Your heart for any unconfessed sin.

When you are afraid, put your trust in Jehovah Shalom. He is the answer to your anxious thoughts, your worry, your distress and He wants to keep you in perfect peace because He is the Prince of Peace, and because He is the Prince of peace, He has the authority and the power to give you peace. Then walk in the light, in obedience to His word so that you may maintain that supernatural peace.

*Fierce passions discompose the mind,
As tempests vex the sea;
But calm content and peace we find,
When, Lord, we turn to Thee.*
-- William Cowper

(Note these words are written by a saint who suffered severely mentally!)

Prince of Peace

Ray Stedman

There are three mentions of the word *peace* in that passage (Eph 2:11, 12, 13,14, 15, 16, 17, 18) [see also sermon by Dr. Wayne Barber on Eph 2:11-15 "Christ the Author of Peace"]: "He is our peace," Paul says, speaking of Christ, and He has made peace (Eph 2:15: "so making peace"), and, "He came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near." In those three occurrences of the word *peace*, you have the apostle's outline of how Christ makes peace, the way he goes about it. So it is very important that we note these. He is our peace -- that is the origin of peace. Then there is the process of peace, how it is actually brought about -- he came and made peace. Finally there is the means of laying hold or possessing that peace -- he preached peace.

I want to underscore for you the fact that this is not mere doctrine, not mere theology. If you are having a conflict with anybody -- whether it is in your home, at your work, in your neighborhood, in the church, or in the world, this is the way of peace. This is the secret of peace. This is the **key to peace**.

First, the origin of peace: "He is our peace, who has made us both one."

Paul starts with a definition of what true peace really is. True peace is **oneness**. It is not merely the cessation of hostility, the absence of conflict; it means being one. This is very important to know. Otherwise, when you talk about peace, you are only being superficial.

Is it peace when you get two armies to lay down their weapons and stop fighting each other? Well, we call it that. And certainly it is to be preferred over armed conflict. But it is not really peace -- not according to God's definition.

Is it peace when a husband and wife agree not to get a divorce but to stay together, perhaps for the sake of the children, but that home continues in coldness and divisiveness, with no harmony or joy? Well, it may be peace according to man's definition, but it isn't according to God's.

Is it peace when two friends who haven't spoken to each other for some time finally decide to agree to disagree, to speak civilly to each other, but they don't seek each other's company any more? Not according to God's definition.

When a church maintains its rituals and programs, and yet is filled with division and strife and coldness and festering resentment, is that a peaceful church? No, not according to this definition.

You see, **peace is oneness, harmony**. It is **sharing mutual enjoyment**. It is **being one**. Anything else is superficial and temporary and highly unsatisfactory. You know this to be true, don't you? You have made peace on superficial terms, and have found it only external. If you merely agree not to fight, it is not peace. And invariably it results, sooner or later, in a new outbreak, with all the previous animosity surging to the surface once again. It is only temporary, and never very satisfying. This is why what we call peace among nations never lasts -- because it isn't really peace. It isn't oneness at all. It is only a weariness with warfare, and agreement to stop it for awhile until we can all recuperate and rearm. Then it breaks out all over again, because nothing is ever settled. God isn't interested in that.

But here the apostle tells us the secret of peace. The secret of oneness is a Person: "He is our peace." And when Christ Jesus makes peace -- between individuals or between nations -- that peace will be a satisfying, permanent, and genuine peace. It will be a real peace that will last and last. And it will be a totally satisfying experience. What Paul is saying is that in order to live at peace, you must have peace. The problem with most of us is that we want to start by clearing up only the results of conflict. God never starts there; he starts with the person. He says peace is a Person, and in order for you to live at peace with someone else, you must be at peace with the Person of Christ. If you have his peace, then you can start solving the conflict around you. But you never can do it on any other basis. So the place to start, the origin of peace, is the settling of any problems between you and Jesus Christ. That is always the place to start.

Many people come to me, as to any pastor, with various problems involving conflict. Usually they are upset, troubled, discouraged, angry. They report to me at great length all the terrible things the other person has done, and all the reasons why they are justified in being so angry, and feeling so mistreated. I listen to it all, and then I have to say to them, "Yes, you've got a problem. But that isn't your only problem. You really have two problems. And the one you haven't mentioned at all is the one you must start with." Then I have to point out to them that their basic problem is that they don't have any peace themselves. They are not at peace. They are upset, angry, emotionally distraught. And everything they do and think is colored by that emotional state. They can't see anything straight, they don't see things in balance, their perspective is distorted, everything is out of focus. And it is impossible to solve the problem -- impossible -- until they themselves acquire peace.

But this is the promise of God to Christians: He is our peace. And once their attitude is changed, once their heart is settled, once they have put the matter into the hands of the Lord, and they see that He is active in it, that He has a solution, and their own heart is therefore at peace, then they can begin to understand what is happening and can apply some intelligent remedies to the situation which will work out the problem. There is profound psychological insight in the fact that the apostle begins with the declaration that Christ is our peace. He alone can accomplish it -- making us one.

Now look at the process of peace. How does it happen? It comes in three stages, Paul says. Three things must happen before you really have oneness. But this is what Christ can do, and this is the way He does it:

First, he "has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, [the hostility must end first] by abolishing in his flesh the law of commandments and ordinances, ... " That is how He breaks down the wall, as we will see in a moment. And, **second**, "that He might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace," And, **third**, "might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end."

I remind you that Paul is talking about the ending of the great conflict between the Jews and the Gentiles of his day. He says the first thing Jesus did was to break down the "middle wall of partition," the "dividing wall of hostility." Paul is referring to a feature of the temple in Jerusalem. He was a Jew, and had been brought up there. He understood the temple -- he had been there many times. And he remembered **the wall**, about 3' or 4' high, which ran through the court of the temple, dividing it into two sections, separating the court of the Gentiles, where the Gentiles were permitted to come, from the inner court, into which only Jews were permitted. There was a sign which warned anyone who wasn't a Jew that if they dared to venture into this inner court, they did so on pain of death. In fact, in the year 1871, archaeologists, digging around the temple site in Jerusalem, actually uncovered the very stone marked with this warning. These were the actual words, translated from both the Hebrew and the Greek:

"No man of another race is to proceed within the partition and enclosing wall about the sanctuary. Any one arrested there will have himself to blame for the penalty of death which will be imposed as a consequence."
([click](#) discussion of the wall)

Now, the wall is a symbol. Actually it was not destroyed until A.D. 70, several years after this letter was written, when the temple itself was destroyed. But Paul says the hostility it represented was demolished in Jesus Christ. At best, the Jews treated the Gentiles with aloofness; at worst, they despised and hated them. There was enormous hostility between these two peoples. Several years ago I walked along the infamous Berlin Wall. As I walked, I saw the East German guards stationed at intervals. And I could feel all the built-in suspicion and mutual distrust, the hatred and hostility, and the outright defiance represented by that wall. Many people have been killed trying to escape from East Germany. And where their bodies fell, the West Germans have erected crosses upon which they place wreaths as a reminder -- in open defiance of the East German guards. You can't enter the neighborhood of that wall without feeling the intense suspicion and hostility it represents.

There are walls like that among us. There are walls in homes like that. There is hostility and hatred and defiance and suspicion and distrust between husbands and wives, between parents and children, and between neighbors and friends. These walls of hostility arise. They are what most of us run up against. We feel the hostility, the anger, the deep-seated resentment and bitterness, and we say, "It's no use; there's nothing we can do." But the apostle says that Jesus Christ knows how to remove these walls. How? Well, Paul tells us: "by abolishing in his flesh the law of commandments and ordinances." That is the way. It is the Law which makes the hostility, and if you remove the Law, you'll end the hostility.

Once again, we are dealing here with a very profound psychological insight. The strength of any hostility is demand. This is what the apostle is saying. What creates hostility? Why, a self-righteous demand upon someone, a demand without any admission of guilt on the part of the one demanding, a one-sided justice, a holier-than-thou insistence. This is what creates hostility. The Jews despised the Gentiles because they considered themselves better than Gentiles. "We have the Law of Moses," they said. "The Law is right and true; it reflects the character of God. You Gentiles don't have the Law." And in their blindness and self-righteous hypocrisy, they thought they were keeping this Law because they didn't do some of the outward, external acts the Law prohibited. And so they hated and despised the Gentiles because they thought they were superior. The Gentiles, on the other hand, hated the Jews, because they knew they lived in self-righteous hypocrisy. So there was intense hostility between them. Jesus' solution is to take away the Law. Remove that from the picture -- help them to see that the Law judges both alike -- and you'll end the hostility. Put them on the same level -- so they both need grace, both need forgiveness -- and you remove hostility.

EIRENE GREEK FOR PEACE

The Greek word **eirene** is derived from the verb "**eiro**" which means to "join together". Thus the picture is that of binding or joining together what is broken or divided setting the divided parts at one again. To "make peace" is to join together that which is separated. (For an excellent illustration of this truth see [One Heart](#)). This meaning is conveyed somewhat by our modern expression of "*having it all together*".

Eirene, originally meant the ordered life that was possible when people were not at war. Later, the concept was expanded to include an inner, personal peace. "Peace" is mentioned over 60 times in the N.T., with this latter meaning. There is a peace that "*the world gives*" but the peace that all men desperately need is found only in the Strong Tower of **Jehovah Shalom** where we experience safety and peace, being "set... securely on high" (Ps 91:14 see Spurgeon) in the midst of very real afflictions and adversity (Jn 14:27; 16:33, Phil 4:6, 7, 8, 9-notes Phil 4:6 4:7 4:8-9).

As noted above, in secular Greek "**eirene**" was originally associated with cessation or absence of war. Before we were born from above, we were "at war" with God. When Jehovah Shalom

"rescued (drew us, snatched from danger - the "jaws of hell" and delivered) us from the domain (power that Satan had over us when we were in Adam) of darkness, and transferred (used in Greek to describe the removal from one place to another) us to the kingdom of His beloved Son (we are no longer "in Adam" and under the subject to the power of Sin and Satan both of which are well versed in destroying men's "peace")" (Colossians 1:13-note, cf Acts 26:18)

In we changed "armies" and more importantly "commanders" - we are no longer subject to the right and might of Satan but are now to be willing subjects, yea even bondservants, of our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ). We are no longer at war with God because we have been

"been justified by faith" and now "we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ro 5:1-note).

In Christ our lives are made whole, our relationships are harmonized, and we experience the spiritual and psychological wholeness that God intended for human beings in the original creation. His peace can provide freedom from disquieting or oppressive thoughts or emotions. Jesus did not end all human wars, but he does make it possible to end the war between God and man. His death is our peace, our means of reconciliation with our Father. **Why did God provide this peace?** Paul explains that

"it was the Father's GOOD PLEASURE for all the fullness 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. And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you (brought you back to the former state of harmony and peace before sin entered the world) in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless (without blemish) and beyond reproach (those who cannot be called into to account, unproveable, unaccusable) (Colossians 1:19, 20-note Colossians 1:20, 31 - note)

When Christ died on the cross He...

"cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.⁵¹ And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom, and the earth shook; and the rocks were split" (Mt 27:50, 51)

His spirit Now the peace with God has broken down the walls and allows us to

"draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (He 4:16, 10:19; 20; 21; 22; 23-see **notes** He 4:16, He 10:19; 20; 21; 22; 23).

Peace does not mean the absence of pain. It means that in our pain, we can have peace because we know Jehovah Shalom and we know He is in control. TRUE PEACE comes not the absence of conflict but from the presence of God, Jehovah Shalom.

A REAL LIFE ILLUSTRATION OF "PEACE"

Jim Walton was translating the NT for the Muinane people of La Sabana in the jungles of Colombia. But he was having trouble with the word **peace**. During this time, Fernando, the village chief, was promised a 20-minute plane ride to a location that would have taken him 3 days to travel by walking. The plane was delayed in arriving at La Sabana, so Fernando departed on foot. When the plane finally came, a runner took off to bring Fernando back. But by the time he had returned, the plane had left. Fernando was livid because of the mix-up. He went to Jim and launched into an angry tirade. Fortunately, Walton had taped the chief's diatribe. When he later translated it, he discovered that the chief kept repeating the phrase, "*I don't have one heart.*" Jim asked other villagers what having "*one heart*" meant, and he found that it was like saying, "*There is nothing between you and the other person.*" That, Walton realized, was just what he needed to translate the word **peace**. To have **peace** with God means that there is nothing--no sin, no guilt, no condemnation--that separates us. And that **peace** with God is possible only through Christ (see **note** Romans 5:1). Do you have "one heart" with God today?

MERIMNA: GREEK FOR ANXIETY or WORRY

Anxiety (3308) ([merimnao](#) from [merimna](#) = anxious care in turn from **merizo** = to divide or draw different directions - which is exactly what **anxiety** does to most of us!) in its basic root meaning refers to **acare** (the sole way it is translated in the KJV) or concern and so to care for someone or something. It is often used in a negative sense and thus is translated as "worry". From the origin, one can see that **merimna** describes the state of "being pulled apart." Thus when circumstances are difficult, it is easy to let oneself be dominated by anxiety and worry.

George Morrison said, "God does not make His children carefree (**Ed note**: freedom from anxiety producing situations) in order that they be careless."

Richards has an excellent summary of **merimnao** (see word study) and [merimna](#) noting that...

When used by the Greeks concerning the future... both came to connote **anxious expectation**. When used of the present, the words expressed an **aching sense of grief**. The meaning of any term, however, is defined by the way it is used. It is the way that Jesus and the writers of the Gospels and Epistles, guided by the Holy Spirit, used words that filled them with their biblical meaning... But while it is legitimate to have concerns that we will at times experience as demanding pressures, there is a limit to their legitimacy. The "worries of this life" may so dominate our attention that they make God's Word unfruitful in our lives (Mt 13:22; Mk 4:19). The pressures of legitimate concerns can cause us to so focus on worldly matters that we forget to relate our needs and our worries to the Lord... By linking legitimate concerns to God, believers are freed from anxiety and worry. This freedom allows us to concentrate on seeking God's kingdom and his righteousness, knowing that "all these things will be given to [us] as well." So Jesus concludes, "Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself."

What the pagan Greeks experienced as anxious concern over a tomorrow they could not control, the believer who knows God as a loving Father can experience in calm confidence. Released from fears about tomorrow, we can concentrate on doing God's will today, as obedient subjects of a kingdom over which the Almighty rules.

The Gospels recognize the tendency of legitimate human concerns to lead to a loss of perspective; we can forget God and adopt a pagan materialism that looks ahead anxiously and concentrates on running after the

material things that seem to offer security. In order to avoid this tendency, believers must orient life to God and realize that life's meaning is to be found in living as subjects who are responsive to their loving, wise, and powerful King.

Both anxiety and worry spring from natural and legitimate concerns that are part of life in this world. But legitimate concerns are handled wrongly when they do one or more of the following: (1) become dominating concerns in our life and lead to fear, (2) destroy our perspective on life and cause us to forget that God exists and cares, or (3) move us to drift into an attitude of constant worry and concern over a future that we cannot control.

Jesus deals with anxiety by calling us to an awareness of God. God does exist, and he cares. He is aware of our needs and is committed to meet our needs. Remaining aware of God frees us from the tyranny of things. It enables us to focus our lives on our relationship with God and go on living a righteous and productive life.

The Epistles add to our understanding by pointing out that areas of legitimate anxiety exist even for the strongest of believers. But the pressures of even legitimate concerns are not to dominate us or to make us habitually anxious, worried people. We escape by using anxiety creatively. This means that we must recognize the feelings of pressure and concern as a call to prayer. We should immediately turn to God to lay our needs and the needs of others before him. We then turn back to live our lives encompassed by his peace. Anxiety, rather than drawing us away from God, draws us to Him and thus fulfills His purpose for it in our lives. (Richards, L: Expository Dictionary) (Bolding added)

Louw and Nida comment that **merimna** describes

"a feeling of apprehension or distress in view of possible danger or misfortune. The term **merimna** may refer to either unnecessary worry or legitimate concern. The equivalent of 'worry' may be expressed in some languages in an idiomatic manner, for example, 'to be killed by one's mind' or 'to be pained by thinking.' (Louw, J. P., and Nida, E. A. Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains Vol. 1, Page 312. New York: United Bible Societies)

Merimna is used 6 times in the NT (Mt 13:22, Mk 4:19, Lk 8:14, 21:34, 2Co 11:28, 1Pe 5:7) and is translated KJV (6) - care, 6 and NAS (6) - anxiety, 1; concern, 1; worries, 3; worry, 1

Barclay observes that in a secular Greek writing (a papyrus letter)...

a wife writes to her absent husband:

"I cannot sleep at night or by day, because of the worry (merimna) I have about your welfare."

A mother, on hearing of her son's good health and prosperity writes back:

"That is all my prayer and all my anxiety (merimna)."

Anacreon, the poet, writes:

"When I drink wine, my worries (merimna) go to sleep."

In Greek the word is the characteristic word for anxiety, and worry, and care. (Barclay, W: The Gospel of Matthew: The Daily study Bible series, Rev. ed. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press)

Vine gives a very illustrative definition of "**merimna**" (Click in depth study on related verb **merimnao**): stating that

"**merimna** (3308) is probably connected with **merizo**, (3307) "to draw in different directions, distract," hence signifies "that which causes this [that is, this effect of being drawn in different directions], a care, especially an anxious care". To worry is in essence to have a "divided mind" (See "[What is worry](#)").

Strong's Lexicon also states that **merimna** is from "**merizo**, (3307) through the idea of distraction." So clearly that which worries or causes anxiety is that which distracts us and tends to draw us in different directions (compare our common expression "I feel like everything is falling apart").

Meyer writes that...

The word **anxiety** comes from the same root as anger, and suggests the idea of choking. **Worry** chokes the life of faith. It does not help us to overcome our difficulties, but unfits us for dealing with them. No weapon that is formed against us shall prosper; every tongue that shall rise against us shall be condemned; our bread shall

be given, and our water sure. God will perfect that which concerneth us, and His goodness and mercy shall never cease. Roll thyself and thy burden on the Lord, and leave them there. Too many take them back again!
(F B Meyer. Our Daily Walk)

The picture even becomes more vivid when we look at Webster's Dictionary which states that **"anxiety"** is derived from the Latin word **"anxius"** which in turn is akin to **"angere"** meaning to strangle or cause distress! So anxiety is a state of extreme uneasiness of mind, a brooding fear about some contingency or a fear of frustration or failure. What a picture of what WORRY/ANXIETY can do to our "PEACE" of mind! (See Mk 4:19, Mt 13:22 for the effect of "worry" or "cares" on the "Word of God"). Oh how we need to know **Jehovah Shalom** not just theologically but experientially as He Who is our Strong Tower and in Whom Alone is genuine peace which ["surpasses all comprehension"](#) (Php 4:7 note) because His peace is independent of the circumstances that "draw us in different directions".

The English word **"worry"** is derived from the high German word meaning "to strangle" and in British dialect "worry" means "to choke" or "to strangle".

Are you worried about your tendency to worry? Let me encourage you to turn your attention to God, especially to an unhurried devotional study of His character revealed in His names or more specifically in His attributes (See **"The Attributes of God"**). You will be amazed at how the Spirit will renew our mind when we shift our focus off of the perplexity of the problems and onto the perfection of the Problem Solver, and once again appreciate that He is everywhere, knows everything, is all powerful, and is able and willing to carry our burdens (Ps 55:22 - [Spurgeon's Note](#), He 2:18-note).

See these RBC devotional booklets

- [What Can I Do With My Worry? - Turning anxiety into trust](#)
- [Overcoming Worry](#)
- [Why Christians Doubt](#)
- [Navigating The Storms Of Life](#)
- [Cultivating A Heart Of Contentment](#)

"How Will My Worry Look?" - Hans Christian Andersen, author of such well-known fairy tales as "The Emperor's New Clothes," had a phobia of being buried alive. As a result, he always carried a note in his pocket telling anyone who might find him unconscious not to assume he was dead. He often left another note on his bedside table stating, "I only seem dead." Such was his anxiety until he finally succumbed to cancer in 1875.

We may think such a fear is strange, but do we have fears that will someday look just as irrational? Is it possible that the day will come when we look back and marvel at our own anxieties? Will we one day wonder at that foolish person who chose to worry rather than to pray? Will time eventually cast us as a pitiful person who was plagued by fear because we did not face life with the resources lavished on us by the Almighty Lord of the universe?

Worrying doesn't change anything. But trusting the Lord changes everything about the way we view life.

Forgive us, Lord, for our inclination to worry. Help us to see how foolish it is for us to worry about what You have promised to provide. Don't let us bury ourselves alive with fears. —Mart De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

A Strategy For Winning Over Worry
Identify specific worries.
Work to change what you can.
Leave what you can't change with God.

When we put our cares in God's hands, He puts His peace in our hearts.

"Forget Worry" - Perhaps you've participated in an experiment where you were given a phrase like "red car" and then were asked to put it out of your mind. But the harder you tried, the more the "red car" dominated your thoughts. This kind of exercise shows that we can never forget something by concentrating on it.

Anxious thoughts, our natural response to the cares of life, are like that. Many of us spend sleepless nights trying to solve complex

problems, and all we accomplish is fixing them more firmly in our minds.

The Bible says that instead of being weighed down by our concerns, we should give them to God. The apostle Peter put it this way: "[Cast] all your care upon Him, for He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7). And in Philippians 4:6, the apostle Paul gave similar instruction.

Jesus told His disciples not to worry about the necessities of life, because "your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things" (Matthew 6:32).

The way to forget our worries is to concentrate on the goodness and loving care of God, not on the problems that plague us. Then we can say with the psalmist, "In the multitude of my anxieties within me, Your comforts delight my soul" (Psalm 94:19). —David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

When we give all our cares to God,
Our worries will depart;
He gives to us a peace of mind
That calms our anxious heart. —Sper

The more you think about God's goodness, the less you'll think about your worries.

Our Daily Bread has the following devotional on "**worry**"...

Worry is merely unbelief parading in disguise! The Scriptures repeatedly warn us against this grievous sin. Ian Maclaren ex-claims, "What does your anxiety do? It does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow, but it does empty today of its strength. It does not make you escape the evil; it makes you unfit to cope with it when it comes. God gives us the power to bear all the sorrow of His making, but He does not guarantee to give us strength to bear the burdens of our own making such as worry induces."

An experienced physician decided to analyze the "worriers" who were his patients. He found that 40 percent of them were apprehensive over things that never happened. About 30 per-cent concerned themselves with past matters now beyond their control. Another 12 percent anxiously feared the loss of their health, although their only illness was in their imagination. And the rest worried about their families, friends, and neighbors, but in most cases he discovered no basis for their fears.

A bassoon player once came to the great conductor Toscanini with furrowed brow and complained that his instrument would not sound the high E flat. Toscanini smiled and replied, "Don't worry. There is no E flat in your music tonight." The musician had been needlessly apprehensive. Many of our worries are like that — unfounded and unnecessary.

Worry is both unprofitable and ungodly. God's grace will be sufficient for each day's need. Take comfort in this thought, and tread the pathway of life with faith, not fear! ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

I walked life's path with "Worry,"
Disturbed and quite unblessed,
Until I trusted Jesus;
Now "Faith" has given rest. — G.W.

- Satan seeks to crush our spirit by getting us to bear tomorrow's burdens with only today's grace!
- Take courage: if God doesn't choose to remove an obstacle, He will help you plow around it!
- Even though you can't control your circumstances, you can control your attitude.
- The perfect cure for worry is trust in God.
- **Anxiety** is a thin stream of fear trickling through the mind. If encouraged, it cuts a channel into which all others thoughts are drained. - Arthur Somers Roche
- **George Mueller** once said that "The beginning of anxiety is the end of faith, and the beginning of true faith is the end of anxiety."
- **Anxiety** is the interest paid on trouble before it is due.
- Oswald Chambers - "Fretfulness springs from a determination to get my own way.
- Spurgeon - Anxiety does not empty tomorrow of its sorrows but only empties today of its strength. Anxiety is the natural result when our hopes are centered in anything short of God and his will for us.

Someone has written that an average person's **anxiety** is focused on

- 40% -- things that will never happen
- 30% -- things about the past that can't be changed
- 12% -- things about criticism by others, mostly untrue
- 10% -- about health, which gets worse with stress
- 8% -- about real problems that will be faced

Thomas Jefferson - How much have cost us the evils that never happened!

Dr E Stanley Jones wrote

I am inwardly fashioned for faith, not for fear. Fear is not my native land; faith is. I am so made that **worry** and **anxiety** are sand in the machinery of life; faith is the oil. I live better by faith and confidence than by fear, doubt and **anxiety**. In **anxiety** and **worry**, my being is gasping for breath—these are not my native air. But in faith and confidence, I breathe freely—these are my native air. A John Hopkins University doctor says, "We do not know why it is that worriers die sooner than the non-worriers, but that is a fact." But I, who am simple of mind, think I know; We are inwardly constructed in nerve and tissue, brain cell and soul, for faith and not for fear. God made us that way. To live by **worry** is to live against reality.

[Day by Day](#)

[\(Play hymn\)](#)

Day by day, and with each passing moment,
Strength I find, to meet my trials here;
Trusting in my Father's wise bestowment,
I've no cause for worry or for fear.
He Whose heart is kind beyond all measure
Gives unto each day what He deems best—
Lovingly, its part of pain and pleasure,
Mingling toil with peace and rest.

COMMENTS ON JOHN 14:27

""Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you... "

Jesus spoke these words to his little (soon to be) troubled motley crew of disciples just before His crucifixion:

"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." (John 14:27)

Now let's do a few simple observations ([interrogating with the 5W/H questions](#)) on this great passage. First ask what is this statement? Is it not a promise from the "Promise keeping God?" What does Jesus emphasize in the first section? Whose peace is it? Is it something we can work up or is it something we are to receive? What's the opposite of the peace Jesus gives? How does the world seek "peace?" What does the godless world try to accumulate falsely thinking this will give them true inner peace? For what is the supernatural peace that Jesus gives as a gift to His disciples the antidote? To ask it another way, what's Jehovah Rapha's (the God Who heals) "cure" for a troubled heart" or a "fearful heart?" Now apply this truth, first by treasuring Jesus' promise in your heart ([memorize it](#)) so that you can begin to "chew on" it ([Meditate on it](#)) all during the day, especially when those fearful, troubling thoughts begin to assault your mind and heart. And turn His words into a prayer thanking Jesus for this indescribable gift of supernatural peace, asking Him by His Spirit to make this truth your daily experience or asking Him to increase your faith so that you willingly take hold of His promise so that it will hold you when the winds of doubt and fear blow strong.

Wiersbe has some wonderful comments on John 14:27:

When you are enjoying God's **peace**, there is joy and contentment. But God's **peace** is not like the "**peace**" that the world offers. The world bases its **peace** on its resources, while God's **peace** depends on relationships. To be right with God means to enjoy the **peace** of God. The world depends on personal ability, but the Christian depends on spiritual adequacy in Christ. In the world, **peace** is something you hope for or work for; but to the

Christian, **peace** is God's wonderful gift, received by faith. Unsaved people enjoy **peace** when there is an absence of trouble; Christians enjoy **peace** in spite of trials because of the presence of power, the Holy Spirit. People in the world walk by sight and depend on the *externals*, but Christians walk by faith and depend on the *eternals*. ([Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor](#))

William Barclay "The peace which the world offers us is the peace of escape, the peace which comes from the avoidance of trouble and from refusing to face things. The peace which Jesus offers us is the peace of conquest (Ed: But not so much us conquering but His Spirit conquering and us learning to run to and rest in the Spirit of Christ's sufficiency in any and every situation) No experience of life can ever take it from us and no sorrow, no danger, no suffering can ever make it less. It is independent of outward circumstances (**Ed: Why? Because this peace is that which comes from a Supernatural Being, Jesus Christ, Who now gives this miraculous peace to His followers through His Spirit, for "the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace"** Ro 8:6-[note](#), cp Gal 5:22-[note](#), Ro 14:17-[note](#) Ro 15:13-[note](#)). ([John 14 Commentary](#))

THE WORLD SEEKS PEACE THREE WAYS

Ray Stedman asks "How does the world give peace? You know how. When a worldling is disturbed and upset and troubled he tries to do one of three things.

- (1) He **first tries to change the circumstances**, because his peace comes from peaceful circumstances. He can be at peace only when everything is peaceful around him. And so he tries desperately to change the circumstances. But they cannot always be changed.
- (2) So if he cannot change them **he tries to forget them and run away** -- go on vacation, go home to mother, take a drug, or get drunk. That forgetfulness is the world's way of finding a degree of peace.
- (3) If he cannot do that then the third thing **he tries is to blame his difficulty on somebody else**. It is everybody's fault but his.

Thus the worldling seeks peace, but he never finds it that way. So Jesus says, "I'm not going to give you peace that way. Not as the world gives, give I unto you." How does He give it, then? He gives it from within. He gives it as you feed upon His affection and His power. As you reckon His promises to be true and turn the job over to Him and leave it in His hands, then you will have peace." (Click "[The Need for Peace](#)" for entire sermon. Also see Pastor Stedman's related devotionals - "[The Need for Peace](#)" and "[The Secret of Peace](#)".")

Why should we seek to KNOW GOD as Jehovah Shalom?

"Peter tells us something about people who **KNOW** God. He says

"Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;" (2 Peter 1:2 note).

His statement reveals that both grace and peace are increased in the believer's life by the full or thorough **KNOWLEDGE** of God [not just gnosis but [epignosis](#)]. *Grace* is God's favor, His gracious care, faithful assistance, and help. We enjoy God's help to the extent that we **KNOW** HIM. That should be easy to understand. If we do not **KNOW** Him very well, we will not **KNOW** what help He has available, or even that He is offering us any help. We must **KNOW** Him in order to be able to accept the benefits He extends to us.

But it is the **peace** that I want to address here—an inner tranquility, a quiet confidence, a stability and control in the face of difficult circumstances. It multiplies in us through the **KNOWLEDGE** of God Who controls our circumstances. How desperately we need peace in our uptight world! When we have peace, we realize that there is no reason to worry over every new problem. The all-powerful God who loves us and cares about every detail in our lives is going to see that it turns out best. The better we get to **KNOW** Him, the more we rest in His wise plans for our future.

There is a great illustration in the book of Daniel of the peace that comes from **KNOWING** God. King Nebuchadnezzar had erected a ninety-foot statue of himself before which all his subjects were commanded to bow. To refuse meant death in the fiery furnace. But Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were men who **KNEW** God. They could not bow before that golden image. When it became obvious that they had refused, they were brought before the king and given one last chance. Nebuchadnezzar proudly announced,

"if you do not worship, you will immediately be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire; and what god is there who can deliver you out of my hands ?"" (Da 3:15-note)

The answer of those three men of God is one of the classic Biblical expressions of faith. They began by saying,

Daniel 3:16-note "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter."

There was no disrespect in their words. They were merely admitting that the accusation was correct and that they had no defense. They did what they had to do. But they continued,

Daniel 3:17,18-note."If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.""

They **KNEW** an all-powerful God Who was able to deliver them. He who created fire and who made their bodies could certainly keep them from being burned. And they believed He would. But even if they did not fully understand God's plan and purpose for them at that time and He did not deliver them, it really did not matter! They would be better off in His presence anyway. In either case, they would not disobey Him by bowing before the image. They had **PERFECT PEACE and TRANQUILITY** in the face of a torturous death because they **KNEW** God.

Wouldn't you like to have peace like that? Wouldn't you like to stand up to any trial, any problem, any danger, or any threat, and be able to say confidently, "It really doesn't matter what happens to me. I know that God will work it together for good. I want only to do His will and glorify Him." That degree of peace depends on an **INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE**. As we learn to **KNOW** Him better and begin to sense His unlimited power coupled with His undying love, we will learn to relax in Him—just as a little child relaxes peacefully in his father's arms while a storm rages outside."

[All comments in [brackets], bolding and italics for emphasis are mine]

The Importance of Remembering

1Cor 10:6 Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved...**11** Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.**12** Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed (present imperative command to continually weigh carefully, beware, watch out for) that he does not fall.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn in a speech made some comments that speak about the path called "forgetfulness" (see Judges 3:7-note) that leads from [Gilgal](#) ("rolling back" of their reproach) to [Bochim](#) ("weeping")...

"Over half a century ago while I was still a child, I recall hearing a number of older people offer the following explanation for the great disasters that had befallen Russia: 'Men have forgotten God; that's why all of this has happened.' Since then I have spent well-nigh 50 years working on the history of our revolution; in the process I have read hundreds of books, collected hundreds of personal testimonies, and have already contributed 8 volumes of my own toward the effort of clearing away the rubble left by that upheaval. But if I were asked today to formulate as concisely as possible the main cause of the ruinous revolution that swallowed up some 60 million of our people, I could not put it more accurately than to repeat: 'Men have forgotten God; that's why all this has happened.'" And so too the forgetfulness of modern man continues to take him further and further from God and closer to the jaws of disaster and the pit of destruction."

REMEMBER...

Straight ahead lies yesterday!

Future events cast their shadows before them.

Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.

In Judges 3:7-note

"The sons of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and FORGOT the LORD their God and served the Baals and the Asheroth."

What makes this declaration of "forgetfulness" even more incredible is that this same Hebrew word for **forgot** is found 13x in Deuteronomy. [Click](#) to read God's repeated warning to the sons of Israel just before they entered into "the land of milk and honey". Let us remember that these things were written for the church's instruction upon whom the ends of the ages has come for

"Blessed is he who READS and those who HEAR the words of the prophecy and HEED the things which are written in it for the time is near." (see Revelation 1:3-[note](#)).

Our Lord's message to the church at Ephesus seems so appropriate as one ponders the "harvest" reaped by sowing the seeds of forgetfulness :

But I have this against you that you have LEFT your first love. Therefore REMEMBER from where you have fallen and REPENT and DO the deeds you did at first or else I am coming to you and will REMOVE your lampstand out of its place -- unless you REPENT." (Rev 2:3; 4-See note [Re 2:3](#); [2:4](#))

Spurgeon Commenting on Ps 91:14

"Because he has loved Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him securely on high, because he has known My name.

- **Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him.**

Not because he deserves to be thus kept, but because with all his imperfections he does love his God; therefore not the angels of God only, but the God of angels himself will come to his rescue in all perilous times, and will effectually deliver him. When the heart is enamored of the Lord, all taken up with him, and intensely attached to him, the Lord will recognize the sacred flame, and preserve the man who bears it in his bosom. It is love, -- love set upon God, which is the distinguishing mark of those whom the Lord secures from ill.

- **I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.**

The man has known the attributes of God so as to trust in him, and then by experience has arrived at a yet deeper knowledge, this shall be regarded by the Lord as a pledge of his grace, and he will set the owner of it above danger or fear, where he shall dwell in peace and joy. None abide in intimate fellowship with God unless they possess a warm affection towards God, and an intelligent trust in him; these gifts of grace are precious in Jehovah's eyes, and wherever he sees them he smiles upon them. How elevated is the standing which the Lord gives to the believer. We ought to covet it right earnestly. If we climb on high it may be dangerous, but if God sets us there it is glorious.