

The Everlasting Covenant of Peace: 4

A Covenant of Harmony

Isaiah 54.10

“For the mountains shall depart And the hills be removed, But My kindness shall not depart from you, Nor shall My covenant of peace be removed,” Says the LORD, who has mercy on you.”

In this series of teaching we have already discovered that peace (*shalom*) has a root meaning of ‘being complete and whole’.

If you look up the word *shalom* in a good Hebrew lexicon (Strong's #7965, #7999 (root)) * you will see that it really encompasses the whole welfare and well-being of man, which includes:

- ⤴ his safety and protection
- ⤴ his health and healing
- ⤴ his prosperity
- ⤴ his soundness of mind
- ⤴ his contentment and happiness
- ⤴ fullness of life, longevity
- ⤴ his relationships with others and particularly with God

In this session we are going to see that this Covenant of Peace that God has given us is a Covenant of Harmony – God's peace enables us to live in harmony with others and more importantly our relationship with God.

First, let's look at our relationship with God.

- ⤴ In the beginning man was created in God's image and likeness.
- ⤴ He had a close relationship with God. He walked with God
- ⤴ Sin separated man and God
- ⤴ God's plan of salvation had to deal with sin, but God had another prize on His mind – the reconciliation of that relationship between God and man.

In Isaiah 53.5 we read that Jesus took the ‘[chastisement for our peace](#)’. Jesus died so that we could have peace.

Romans 5.1, 6-10

- (v1) “[having been justified... we have peace with God](#)”

justified – acquitted of all charges.

The blood sacrifice made by Jesus fully acquitted us of all charges – cleared on all counts that were against us - Colossians 2.9-15

We are justified by faith – *if we believe* (see Romans 4.23-25). Jesus died and rose again for our justification.

Therefore, Paul writes, seeing we have been justified by faith, we have **peace** with God – we are recipients of that peace.

The word translated peace in this verse is *eirene* (Strongs #1515)* – peace/harmony between two individuals, and also security, safety and prosperity (because peace and harmony make and keep things safe and prosperous) - whilst it also means to be at peace, the main emphasis of *eirene* in the New Testament is concerned with our relationship with God (being joined to Him). The most probable root is *eiro* meaning ‘to join’*

- **(vs 6-10)** As we look further into the chapter we see that God's purpose in sending Jesus to be our Saviour was not just our justification but also our reconciliation.

*reconciled** – to exchange (as coins for others of equivalent value), receive/return into favour.

We are reconciled to God – not the other way around, God did not need to be restored to us, we needed to be restored to Him (***illustration of the Bringing Britain Back to God leaflet***)

But this reconciliation involved God moving towards man – He sent Jesus to die for us while we were still sinners (v8). He moved towards us; He left the glory of Heaven and stepped down into our realm; He became a man so that He could die for us and pay the penalty of sin. All this was done that we might have peace.

This Covenant of Peace requires us to move towards others in reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5.14-18

(v14-15) He died for us that we might live for Him – relationship

(v16-17) We are no longer the same, we are no longer in the flesh, but all things have been made new. Grace and peace have been at work in us transforming us.

(v18) He has reconciled us and given us the ministry of reconciliation. We should move towards others to bring them into peace.

“But all things are from God, Who through Jesus Christ reconciled us to Himself [received us into favour, brought us into harmony with Himself] and gave to us the ministry of reconciliation [that by word and deed we might aim to bring others into harmony with Him]” (Amplified)

This shows us that the Covenant of Peace is not only at work in us to bring us into harmony with God but also with one another

We cannot win others for Jesus if we do not live in peace and harmony with them – all that achieves is alienation. Many of today’s evangelistic efforts involve some form of bridge-building/social relationship initiatives e.g. over a meal.

Jesus taught us to live side by side in peace/harmony with one another. As with everything, this Covenant works by love. Love is the foundation of it.

We love others, no matter what their background, race, or culture – that's the extension of the Covenant of Peace.

Paul writes, in **Galatians 3.28** that we are all one in Christ. We do not make exceptions depending on a persons ethnicity or gender – we are all one. We are to live in peace with them.

Romans 12.18-21

Writing to the Christians living in Rome, he put it like this:

“If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men” (v18)

Paul quotes the Proverbs (25.21-22) to show that simple acts of love and kindness cultivate peace.

Living in peace with one another was the expected way for the child of God. The Romans were known for their harshness and abruptness, but Paul challenged them to be at peace.

1 Thessalonians 5.13 – Paul writes to them 'be at peace among yourselves'

Ephesians 4.3 – he writes that we should “endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”

Colossians 3.12-15

There may be complaints and frictions from time to time, but here we are told to “let the peace of God rule”. This peace restrains anger, wrath and revenge, and moderates heated spirits. This peace is the ruler, the umpire of our lives.

This metaphor is taken from the Olympic games where the umpire kept the peace and determined who the victor was and who had won the crown. In this verse Paul states that we must let peace be the umpire in all our dealings with others.

We may feel we are in the right, or deserve to be heard – it does not matter how we feel, we should cultivate peace, let peace rule.

However fierce the storm may rage, we should let peace rule.

We have seen here that the Covenant of Peace is a covenant of harmony with God and with others.

*Lexical resources:

Strongs Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries / Brown Driver Brigg's Hebrew Definitions / Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words / Thayer's Greek Definitions