

The Everlasting Covenant of Peace: 8

A Covenant of Contentment & Rest

We began a few weeks ago looking at shalom in the light of its' meaning the whole well-being and welfare of man. So far we have seen that *shalom* includes:

- our safety & protection
- harmony in regards to our relationships (i) with God and (ii) towards others
- soundness and clarity of mind.
- health and healing
- prosperity

Today we are going to look at shalom – our covenant of contentment, happiness and satisfaction and rest.

Isaiah states in 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”

This verse is describing some major geological events that would change the scenery of the earth.

- It is describing some turbulent times – times of unrest and instability – times of confusion – times when the storm is raging and it looks like we shall sink
- Even though we can be faced with such situations and circumstances, we can know the covenant of peace and the contentment and rest that it affords us.

Mark 4.35-41

- Jesus is in the boat with his disciples after a full-day's teaching
- As they cross the lake Jesus falls asleep in the stern
- a great windstorm arose, the waves beat into the boat and began to fill it
- Jesus is woken by the disciples – 'don't you care that we are perishing' – don't you care we are in trouble.
- Jesus rebukes the winds and speaks peace to the sea
- there was a great calm – not just of the weather conditions, but also among the disciples.

“... and there was [*immediately*] a great calm (a perfect peacefulness)” (vs 39, Amp)

The peace of God brought a contentment upon a troubled situation

John 14.27

“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

- Jesus speaks these words to His disciples just hours before He is arrested

- The disciples are about to go through their greatest trial – something they are not expecting is going to shake the foundation of their faith.
- Jesus bequeaths the best thing to them for their hour of need – peace, *shalom*
- The world cannot offer this peace, it cannot give this contentment
- The world's peace is very transient – governed by other factors eg, feelings, certain conditions
- “Let not your heart be troubled – let it not be afraid” - let not your heart be agitated, troubled or confused by fear or uncertainty. We can live our lives in total contentment, rest and satisfaction because of the covenant of peace.
- You can live at peace in the midst of a storm

Philippians 4.11 Paul could say “...I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content”

“... for I have learned how to be content (satisfied to the point where I am not disturbed or disquieted) in whatever state I am. I know how to be abased and live humbly in straitened circumstances, and I know also how to enjoy plenty and live in abundance. I have learned in any and all circumstances the secret of facing every situation, whether well-fed or going hungry, having a sufficiency and enough to spare or going without and being in want” (vs 11-12, Amp)

Paul says that he has learned the secret of facing every situation. Paul had learned the secret of the covenant of peace – that was his teaching a few verses earlier (vs 6-7)

- be anxious for nothing
- let your requests be made known to God
- rest – knowing that the peace of God will guard your hearts and minds

David had learned the same secret:

Psalm 4. 6-8

- many will say ‘who will show us any good’ – ‘O that we might see some good’ (Amp) – if only things would change – when are things going to get better?
- ‘you have put gladness in my heart’ - “But the joy that you have given me is more than they will ever have with all their grain and wine” (TEV). gladness – joy that comes as a result of something.
- ‘I will lie down in peace and sleep’ - I am contented, I am in peace – David didn't lose any sleep, he rested – he had learned the secret of the covenant of peace

Psalm 23. 1-4

- verses 1-3 describe a man who is contented and satisfied, a man at peace
- ‘though I walk through the valley’ – though turbulent times may come, ‘I will fear no evil’ - I am still at peace – ‘You are with me’ - the Prince of Peace is in the vessel
- ‘your rod and staff, they comfort me’ – shepherds rod and staff protected (*rod*) and guided (*staff*) the sheep - the peace of God guards and garrisons the heart - we are lead by the still waters of peace

Proverbs 19.23

“The fear of the LORD leads to life, And he who has it will abide in satisfaction; He will not be visited with evil.”

- fear of the Lord – a reverence, respect; devotion, worship of God
- those who fear God abide in satisfaction

- life – (plural) – resurrection and eternal life

“The fear of the Lord leads to life: Then one rests content, untouched by trouble” (NIV)

‘Godliness (fear of the Lord) with contentment is great gain’ (1 Timothy 6.6)

True peace (contentment, rest and satisfaction) comes from knowing and fearing God.

Genesis 17.1

“When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless”

blameless (Heb #8549) – perfect, complete, whole, entire, sound - *the definitions of peace*

He is the All-Sufficient One (El-Shaddai) – He will take care of everything

- we don't need to fret or be anxious
- we don't need to worry or fear
- we can be calm and at rest in the midst of troubled circumstances
- He is the Prince of Peace.

Those who fear God, rest and abide in full contentment – they have learned the secret of the covenant of peace.