Perfect Peace

(Isaiah 26:3-4)
5-8-2024



Introduction:

* In a world of rapidly increasing turmoil and unrest, you can experience perfect peace today and forever!

I. The Giver of Perfect Peace: Our Faithful God (v.3a)

II. The Nature of Perfect Peace: A Persistent Focus on God (v.3b)

III. The Reason for Perfect Peace: An Undying Trust in God (v.3c - 4)

A. Trust and Don't Stop Trusting (v.4a)

B. The Lord Jehovah is the Rock of Ages (v.4b)

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The word “peace” or a form of this word occurs 423 times in the KJV.

"The Bible opens with peace in the Garden of Eden and closes with peace in eternity" (MacArthur, John, p. 209)

In a world of turmoil, terror, and trouble, nothing is more soothing to the soul than genuine peace.

Peace is especially needed in light of current world events:

1) The 9/11 terrorist attack at the World Trade Center & Pentagon
2) The counter-act of war against terrorists in Iraq
3) Misc. shootings, stabbings, drownings, etc.

“Peace” = an inner calmness and feeling of security despite outward circumstances

In the 1960’s and 70’s, the raising of the hand and the extending of the index and middle finger came to symbolize “peace.”

Peace means a lot to a Jew, for the typical greeting in Hebrew is *shalom* which means “peace.”

I saw a bumper sticker which said: "Imagine world peace"

There will be no true world peace until the prince of peace comes to establish it.

Man's nature since the fall has been opposed to peace (EX: Cain killed Abel).

Because man is basically selfish, conflict generally occurs whenever someone else gets in the way of what we want.

". . . The popular philosophy of the world, bolstered by the teachings of many psychologists and counselors, is to be put self first. But when self is first, peace is last." (MacArthur, p. 210)

Our natural, unregenerate proneness is toward war not peace; conflict not cooperation; violence not serenity; antagonism not unity; racial discrimination not social harmony; bloodshed not protection of life; hate not love.

The opposite of peace is turmoil, discord, confusion, fighting, and war.

Despite the clamor for peace (as evidenced by marches, rallies, protests, demonstrations, and riots), our society really is opposed to true peace.

Our society exalts violence and war. "The model man is not meek but macho. The model hero is not self-giving but self-seeking, not generous but selfish, not gentle but cruel, not submissive but aggressive, not meek but proud."

If you don't believe that man's natural tendency is bent toward violence, then ask why TV and the movies have so much blood and gore. People pay big money to go to a professional boxing match for the sheer enjoyment of seeing two men attempt to knock the brain out of each other. The main attraction of hockey games has become the brawls and fights.

Because so often our world is characterized by fighting and unloading ammunition at others in a vain quest for sovereignty (power), the scarcity of peace has prompted someone to suggest that "peace is that glorious moment in history when everyone stops to reload" (cited by MacArthur, p. 209).

We live in a day of increasing unrest; struggles within and without.

The unrest many feel in their hearts today is due to a lack of God's perfect peace.

--Like the raging sea, many people's emotions rock back and forth with no stability.

"Perfect peace" –lit. in Hebrew – "peace, peace." A full, genuine, and lasting peace; internal well-being.

"Peace" = *shalom* – an inner feeling of security and safety; spiritual tranquility and quietness.

Isaiah 25 in fact is a song (v. 1). A song you will not hear on any of the popular music stations, but one that will be sung in the future millennial kingdom when Christ reigns after the resurrection (v. 19) and after the great tribulation and the Day of the Lord's wrath (v. 20-21).

Isaiah 26 is a song of praise. Praise given to God following the Day of the Lord's judgment (SEE Is. 24:19-23) and following the resurrection of the saints (25:8-9).

Who will sing this song in Is. 26? Those who endured the troubles and tribulations preceding the Millennial kingdom, those who made it through the greatest time of trial ever to fall upon planet earth.

Two artist's depiction of peace: one man painted a picture of following hills, soft fields of grain, beautiful blue sky and light puffy clouds. Another man painted a picture of a terrifying storm with wind, lightning and heavy rain. And in the middle of the storm, a little bird perched calmly on a branch.

God, though Isaiah the Prophet, has much to say about peace:

Isa 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.
Isa 9:7 Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.
Isa 26:3 Thou wilt keep *him* in perfect peace, *whose* mind *is* stayed *on thee*: because he trusteth in thee.
Isa 26:12 LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us.
Isa 27:5 Or let him take hold of my strength, *that* he may make peace with me; *and* he shall make peace with me.
Isa 32:17 And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.
Isa 32:18 And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places;
Isa 45:7 I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these *things*.
Isa 48:18 O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea:
Isa 48:22 *There is* no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.
Isa 52:7 How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!
Isa 53:5 But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.
Isa 54:10 For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee.
Isa 54:13 And all thy children *shall be* taught of the LORD; and great *shall be* the peace of thy children.
Isa 55:12 For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap *their* hands.
Isa 57:2 He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, *each one* walking *in* his uprightness.
Isa 57:19 I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to *him that is* far off, and to *him that is* near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him.
Isa 57:21 *There is* no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.
Isa 59:8 The way of peace they know not; and *there is* no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.

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I. The Giver of Perfect Peace: Our Faithful God (v.3a)

"Keep" -= *(natsar)* to keep guard as a watchman would vigilantly watch over a city so as to protect it from dangers and enemy intruders.

God keeps the heart of those who trust Him. He preserves the emotionally stability of those who look to Him.

The Lord Jesus (who is Jehovah God) said in John 14:27, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

This peace is rooted in the person of Christ. It flows exclusively from one source.

This peace does not come from the Virgin Mary, some alleged saint, or from some religious denomination.

Rather, it comes from Jesus and Jesus alone. It is His peace. It belongs to Him (since He is the "prince of peace"). It is the peace He exhibited in the face of the worst suffering ever experienced. It is the peace He dispersed to His disciples throughout the book of Acts and the New Testament era.

'Not as the world giveth" – The world's "peace" is not true peace.

1) The world's peace is dependent upon favorable circumstances (Christ's peace can be had in all of life's experiences) (Jn. 16:23 – even in tribulation).

2) The world's peace is often artificially produced (through medication, drugs or alcohol) (no substances but faith bring the Lord's peace).

3) The world's peace comes via a sense of security in man, material things or money (God's peace is not dependent on any "security" this world offers).

4) The world's peace may be here today and gone tomorrow 9Christ's peace lasts forever)

5) The world's peace is deceptive (the ungodly may think all is "peace and safety" without God, and then "sudden destruction cometh upon them")

"The world bases its peace on it 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." (Wiersbe, p. 354).

You may not always have:

1. Domestic peace
   (Jesus came not to bring peace in all human relationships [due to man's rebellion against Him, this is rare], "but a sword…")

2. Societal peace
   (until the Prince of Peace returns; but you can have real inner peace despite all external circumstances)

--Look to Jesus alone for this peace **John 16:33**

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

Just as He said, "Peace, be still," to the stormy sea, He can do the same for your stormy life.

Just as Jesus would experience the peace and presence of the Father in the midst of His greatest tribulation, so the disciples could experience the peace of Christ due to His abiding presence.

"Note the contrast between 'in Me' and 'in the world.' In Christ there is peace; in the world there is tribulation" (Wiersbe, p. 366).

"In the world ye shall have tribulation" – The pressures of life are to varying degrees the experience of all believers. God never promised to keep us from tribulation, but He did promise to be with us through it and to give us His peace.

"In Me ye might have peace" – True peace is found in none other than Christ. He will never leave us nor forsake us. He is with us through every trial. Knowing that He is always present fills us with a peaceful joy that no tribulation can take away.

Because Jesus overcame the world on our behalf, we can cheer up (be encouraged). He overcame via His resurrection, and we overcome via our union with His resurrection. Therefore, we will also overcome. Victory belongs to the believer!

"George Morrison defined peace as 'the possession of adequate resources.' In Jesus Christ, we have all the resources that we need." (Wiersbe, p. 366).

II. The Nature of Perfect Peace: A Persistent Focus on God (v.3b)

"Whose mind is stayed on Thee" – Peace, perfect peace comes to the one whose spiritual focus is without distraction or diversion, looking to God. Steadfast meditation on God and His truth is the secret to emotional stability.

How can I have a mind which is "stayed on God?" Be persistent in your times of daily communion with God.

--Consistent reading/hearing of His Word
--Consistent prayer (without ceasing)
--Consistent fellowship with His people
--Consistent meditation on God and His truth

Joshua 1:8
This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

Persistence is needed as we are looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Persistence is needed as we remain steadfast, unmoveable (1 Cor. 15:58).

As James said: "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways"

People are depressed because they don't think right.
People are sinful because they don't think right.
People are apathetic because they don't think right.
People are discouraged because they don't think right.

III. The Reason for Perfect Peace: An Undying Trust in God (v.3c – 4)

The specific reason why a person with a steadfast focus on God has perfect peace is found at the end of verse 3.

"Because he trusteth in Thee" – Perfect peace comes from God to a man with a Theocentric focused mind, because he has faith in the true and living God.

“Faith is the victory that overcomes the world” (I Jn. 5:4)

FAITH: F - Forsaking
A - All else
I - I
T - Trust
H - Him

--Faith was Noah’s key to overcoming God’s judgment on this world (He built the ark by faith - Heb. 11:7).

--Faith was Abraham’s key to overcoming the security of this world (He left his homeland by faith - Heb. 11:8-10).

--Faith was Joseph’s key to overcoming the persecutions of this world (he forgave his family and foes by faith - Gen. 50).

--Faith was Moses’ key to overcoming the pleasures of sin of this world (he forsook Egypt by faith - Heb. 11:24-27).

--Faith was Rahab’s key to overcoming the consequences of sin in this world (she came to fear God by faith - Heb. 11:31).

--Faith was David’s key to overcoming the giants of this world (he was victorious over Goliath by faith - I Sam. 16-17).

--Faith was Daniel’s key to overcoming the threats of this world (he prayed to God and was triumphant over the lion’s den by faith - Heb. 11:33; Dan. 6).

(The same goes for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego - Dan. 3:23-28)

A. Trust and Don’t Stop Trusting (v.4a)

Peace comes to the man/woman of faith.

--Personal faith – **“trust ye”** (not borrowed faith)

--Faith that is anchored in God alone (no one else and nothing else)

--Faith that won’t let go (**“forever”**)

B. The Lord Jehovah is the Rock of Ages (v.4b)

"Everlasting strength" – lit. Rock of Ages; God is worthy of our faith because He is an eternal rock. He is a firm and lasting foundation upon which our faith rests.

Conclusion: There are two aspects to God's Peace

- There is Peace with God (Positional Justification) (Romans 5:1)
- And there is the Peace of God (Practical Emotional Rest) (Philippians 4:7)

You cannot have the Peace of God until you have Peace with God

Romans 5:1
Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

ILLUS: of the joy that comes when you're at peace with someone you offended.

Peace with God = not speaking about a feeling of peace; but rather a relationship of peace. Paul is not speaking of the changed attitude of a sinner toward God, but God toward the sinner.

God is no longer at odds with the believer. The believer is no longer an object of wrath (Rom. 9:22). God is no longer angry with the wicked one (Ps. 7:11).

Peace with God only comes after one is right with God (Justification).

Lit. "having been justified (aorist tense) by faith we have (present tense) peace with God.

No one has peace with God who has not been made just before God. Note: the word "justified" is passive, meaning God does the justifying, not man.

Peace with God is only "through (by means of) our Lord Jesus Christ"

NOTE: The emphasis on the word ("through" or "by")

It is by whom (Christ) that we have access by faith into this grace (v. 2).

The believer is said to be "justified by His blood . . . saved from wrath through Him" (v. 9); "reconciled to God by the death of His Son . . . saved by His life" (v. 10); "we also joy in God through our Lord . . . by whom we have now received the atonement" (v. 11).

There is no peace apart from Christ.

Jesus is the only means (Acts 4:12) and mediator (I Tim. 2:5) to get to God.

SONG: “Rock of Ages,” “How Can I Fear”