

**Peace on Earth?**

**Does the Bible proclaim that Jesus would bring peace on earth?**

**What is the difference between a peace keeper and a peace maker?**

**How would you define/describe peace?**

**When trying to understand a word in scripture there are 3 ways to approach understanding.**

1. **Pray for understanding**
2. **What is the original word – Hebrew (Salom) Greek (Eirene) More on that later**
3. **Look up scriptures where word is used, seek context.**

**Pray for Understanding**

**Consider the following passages**

**Proverbs 28:5**

**Evil men do not understand justice, But those who seek the Lord understand all things.**

**Psalm 111:10**

**The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments; His praise endures forever.**

**Colossians 1:9**

**For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,**

**What is the original Word for Peace?**

**Hebrew Salom:** completeness, soundness, welfare, peace

Rabbi Robert I. Kahn of Houston, Texas, capsulizes the distinctives of "Roman" peace and "Hebrew" shalom:

One can dictate a peace; shalom is a mutual agreement.  
Peace is a temporary pact; shalom is a permanent agreement.  
One can make a peace treaty; shalom is the condition of peace.  
Peace can be negative, the absence of commotion. Shalom is positive, the presence of serenity.  
Peace can be partial; shalom is whole.  
Peace can be piecemeal; shalom is complete.

**God's shalom**

**The criteria for shalom, true peace, then, rests with God. This definition of peace must begin with the assumption that there is a Creator and that He has established a standard for us. Hence, there must come an acceptance (at least for the understanding of this article) of the way in which God has chosen to reveal Himself to man – through the Bible.**

**Greek: (eirene from verb eiro = to join or bind together that which has been separated) literally pictures the binding or joining together again of that which had been separated or divided and thus setting at one again, a meaning convey by the common expression of one “having it all together”. It follows that peace is the opposite of division or dissension. Peace as a state of concord and harmony is the opposite of war. Peace was used as a greeting or farewell corresponding to the Hebrew word shalom - "peace to you".**

**William Barclay has the following notes on eirene in his comments on several Bible books (there is some repetition) -**

**(1) Note on Galatians 5 - "Peace in contemporary colloquial Greek...had two interesting usages. It was used of the serenity which a county enjoyed under the just and beneficent government of a good emperor; and it was used of the good order of a town or village. Villages had an official who was called the superintendent of the village’s eirene, the keeper of the public peace. Usually in the New Testament eirene stands for the Hebrew**[**Shalom**](https://www.preceptaustin.org/jehovah_shalom_the_lord_is_peace#hebrew%20for%20peace%20-%20shalom)**and means not just freedom from trouble but everything that makes for a man’s highest good. It is interesting to note that Chara (Grace) and Eirene (Peace ~ "Irene") both became very common Christian names in the Church." (**[**Galatians 5**](https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/dsb/galatians-5.html12)**)**

**(2) Note on Galatians 1 - Peace is "everything which will make his mind pure, his will resolute and his heart glad. It is that sense of the love and care of God, which, even if his body is tortured, can keep a man's heart serene." (**[**Galatians 1**](http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/dsb/view.cgi?bk=47&ch=1&vs=0)**)**

**(3) Note on Ephesians 1 - "In the Bible peace is never a purely negative word; it never describes simply the absence of trouble. Shalom means everything which makes for a man's highest good. Christian peace is something quite independent of outward circumstances. A man might live in ease and luxury and on the fat of the land, he might have the finest of houses and the biggest of bank accounts, and yet not have peace; on the other hand, a man might be starving in prison, or dying at the stake, or living a life from which all comfort had fled, and be at perfect peace. The explanation is that there is only one source of peace in all the world, and that is doing the will of God. When we are doing something which we know we ought not to do or are evading something that we know we ought to do, there is always a haunting *dispeace* at the back of our minds; but if we are doing something very difficult, even something we do not want to do, so long as we know that it is the right thing there is a certain contentment in our hearts. "In his will is our peace." (**[**Ephesians 1**](http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/dsb/view.cgi?bk=48&ch=1&vs=1&search=day%20of%20atonement)**)**

**(4) Note in Matthew 5 - "In Hebrew peace is never only a negative state; it never means only the absence of trouble; in Hebrew peace always means everything which makes for a man's highest good. In the east when one man says to another, Salaam--which is the same word--he does not mean that he wishes for the other man only the absence of evil things; he wishes for him tile presence of all good things. In the Bible peace means not only freedom from all trouble; it means enjoyment of all good." (**[**Matthew 5**](http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/dsb/view.cgi?bk=mt&ch=5)**)**

**(5) Note on grace and peace in**[**Philippians 1:2**](https://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/Phil%201.2)**- "When Paul put together these two great words, grace and peace, (charis and eirene), he was doing something very wonderful. He was taking the normal greeting phrases of two great nations and molding them into one. Charis is the greeting with which Greek letters always began and eirene the greeting with which Jews met each other. Each of these words had its own flavor and each was deepened by the new meaning which Christianity poured into it. Charis is a lovely word; the basic ideas in it are joy and pleasure, brightness and beauty; it is, in fact, connected with the English word charm. But with Jesus Christ there comes a new beauty to add to the beauty that was there. And that beauty is born of a new relationship to God. With Christ life becomes lovely because man is no longer the victim of God's law but the child of his love. Eirene is a comprehensive word. We translate it peace; but it never means a negative peace, never simply the absence of trouble. It means total well-being, everything that makes for a man's highest good. It may well be connected with the Greek word eirein, which means to join, to weave together. And this peace has always got to do with personal relationships, a man's relationship to himself, to his fellow-men, and to God. It is always the peace that is born of reconciliation. So, when Paul prays for grace and peace on his people he is praying that they should have the joy of knowing God as Father and the peace of being reconciled to God, to men, and to themselves--and that grace and peace can come only through Jesus Christ. (**[**Philippians 1**](http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/dsb/view.cgi?bk=49&ch=1&vs=1&search=leviticus%2017:11)**)**

**(6) Note on "wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable" in**[**James 3:17**](https://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/James%203.17)**- "The truewisdom is eirenikos (1516). We have translated this peaceable but it has a very special meaning. Eirene means peace, and when it is used of men its basic meaning is right relationships between man and man, and between man and God The true wisdom produces right relationships. There is a kind of clever and arrogant wisdom which separates man from man, and which makes a man look with superior contempt on his fellows. There is a kind of cruel wisdom which takes a delight in hurting others with clever, but cutting, words. There is a kind of depraved wisdom which seduces men away from their loyalty to God. But the true wisdom at all times brings men closer to one another and to God. (**[**James 3**](http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/dsb/view.cgi?bk=jas&ch=3&vs=16)**)**

**As you probably noticed much of what we see in the above commentary points to use in scripture.**

**Did God promise “peace on earth” or “on earth peace”? What’s the difference?**