



The ENJOY THE BIBLE

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The God of Peace

Pace. Even the sound of the word has something soothing and pleasant about it. Though not strictly classified as an onomatopoetic word, it possesses the essential quality of such, both in English as well as in other languages. It has no sharpness in sound nor in appearance; no jarring impact occurs when it is spoken, heard, or read. Rather in accordance with its meaning it possesses the exact opposite features, being quiet in sound and gentle on contact.

Hence in meaning and in sound the word “peace” is welcomed by our inner man. It is no intruder or unwanted guest. Of all the visitors that come ‘knocking on the door of our mind,’ peace is one that we long to see and readily receive. It is the most welcome of guests. Moreover we want it to reside with us; to make itself at home with us. It can never overstay its welcome, for it is always welcome. Because of this we are grieved whenever peace takes its leave, and when unwanted guests arrive to take its place in our minds. We are not at ease and relaxed when we are intruded upon by such characters as stress, distress, grief, sorrow, perplexity, anxiety, carefulness, worry, fear, dread, despair, and the like. Their visits are always unsettling and upsetting. Hence we long to see them leave, and for peace to pay us a visit again.

Peace, therefore, is something we much desire. We also view it as a most precious commodity. For often we will seek it at great cost; sometimes even at all costs. This is because there is little that compares with ‘being at peace,’ both in our inner man and in our relationships with others. In view of this, being ‘at peace’ is often the consummate expression used by psychologists and the like when referring to what best characterizes ‘good mental health.’

Now peace in its various forms and occurrences is not only something that we naturally desire in the details of our lives, it is also something that God Himself wants us to possess. Hence He has fully provided for us to have it, and as such He both deliberately and constantly extends it to us. In fact understanding and appreciating the reality of this is so fundamental to our relationship with God, and to our

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fellowship with Him in our daily lives, that He has Paul preface each of his epistles to us with this very offering by saying,...

“Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Moreover in the outworking of our sonship edification, (as we progress through its curriculum for our godly edifying, processing its numerous forms of doctrine and so growing and maturing), we encounter God presenting Himself to us as “the God of peace” in various contexts and for various reasons. For example,...

³³ Now the God of peace *be* with you all. Amen. (Romans 15:33)

²⁰ And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen. (Romans 16:20)

¹¹ Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you. (II Corinthians 13:11)

²³ Peace *be* to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 6:23)


⁹ Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you. (Philippians 4:9)


¹⁶ Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord *be* with you all. (II Thessalonians 3:16)


God is indeed “the God of peace.” And though realizing this is not something that is exclusive to us in this present dispensation of God’s grace, there is a real sense in which

From EBM To You

Dear Friends of EBM,

 Some of you may have noticed that we recently made some changes to our GraceOnline >> www.GraceOnline.org << website. It has been given a new look, along with making some improvements in function. If you have not seen the changes, by all means take a look. If you have a listing in any of the directories at GraceOnline, we would ask that you confirm that your information is correct, as well as current. We also thank those of you who, when your information changes, do submit a change of information form. Keeping information current is very helpful to those who use the directories.

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— — — — —
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— — — — —

we today are to have a special understanding and appreciation for God as such. For the fact is that knowing God as “the God of peace,” deeply appreciating Him as such, and hence loving Him as such, is a definite and pre-planned objective in our sonship education and edification. It is not only one of the specific ways in which we as “sons” have intimacy of fellowship with God our Father, it is also one of the primary ways in which we learn about the excellency of the power of God’s word operating within us. Moreover this particular aspect of our education and edification provides for the development within us of an increasing ability to trust in, and operate upon, the power of the effectual working of God’s word within us *no matter what*.

Wherefore our God and Father presents Himself to us as “the God of peace” a number of times and in several different contexts. With this being so, as we proceed through the curriculum for our sonship edification we are taught to understand and appreciate the issue of “peace” in a number of different ways, ranging from the fundamental issue of having “peace with God” being justified in His sight, to the issue of possessing complete inner peace, along with joy, even when encountering the most extreme adversities from the Satanic policy of evil against us.

Therefore the “peace” that God extends to us is manifold and varied, existing in many forms. Yet of all its forms and occurrences, one of the most fundamental is the *Godly peace* for our inner man that our Father wants us to possess when we experience disquieting, disturbing, and trying circumstances in the details of our lives. And though this is a fundamental matter, and we are taught about it right from the outset of our sonship edification, it is also something that God has designed for us to benefit from throughout the growth and maturing of our Christian lives. In view of this the Godly peace that our Father extends to us is far-reaching and mighty in its capacity, being able to deal effectually with whatsoever may come our way as we progress through our sonship edification.

Wherefore it behooves us to be certain that we understand and appreciate the issue of possessing such Godly peace. Especially the particular mechanism by which God has purposed for us to acquire it and enjoy it, and

also through which we are to grow to love Him as “the God of peace.” And the mechanism for all of this is the direct communion and fellowship we are able to have, and should have, with our Father through prayer.

Peace and the Role of Prayer

Prayer truly is designed to be an integral component of our peace. For this reason when we are in the initial stage of our sonship edification and the apostle Paul deals with us about properly responding to tribulation in our lives, he teaches us to be,...

¹² Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; (Romans 12:12)

Likewise in God’s program with Israel is this so. Hence, for example, as James says to the members of the remnant of Israel,...

^{13a} Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. (James 5:13a)

Prayer, therefore, is a pivotal mechanism for producing peace when needed. It is designed to have a tranquilizing ministry to it. And as we partake of its tranquilizing ministry, and benefit from it amid the details of our lives, we come to know, understand, appreciate, and love our God and Father as “the God of peace” that He is.

Now before considering this any further, there is an important matter that needs to be addressed regarding prayer itself.

An Intelligent Communion; Not an Abstract or Mystical Experience

Unfortunately a lot of Christians lack a real solid and clear understanding of what prayer is. Hence their ability to appreciate its tranquilizing ministry, and fully benefit from it, is hindered. Moreover there is also much misunderstanding, misinformation, and erroneous teaching about prayer today, which contributes to a lack of proper understanding and so compounds the problem all the more. Because of this a lot of Christians actually look upon prayer as something different from what it really is. Likewise many seek to obtain benefits from it that either do not exist, or that do not pertain to what God is doing today.

Now when Christians learn the need to be “rightly dividing the word of truth” in ac-

cordance with the great dispensational change that God has made, this certainly goes a long way towards rectifying the problem. For at least they are no longer trying to operate upon doctrines and promises about prayer, and examples of it, that pertain to God's program and dealings with Israel, and not to us in this present dispensation of His grace.

Yet this does not clear up all the misunderstanding and misinformation about prayer. For often times the very nature of prayer itself is either not clearly understood, or it is badly misunderstood. And sadly this seems to be on the rise today, with prayer more frequently being taught and described as something other than what it really is. Consequently instead of prayer being understood to be an intelligent, thoughtful activity that we participate in with God, in which we have heart-to-heart fellowship based upon specific knowledge that God has given to us in His word, Christians are given to understand it to be something other than this; something more lofty and transcendental in nature; something more experiential.¹

Hence increasingly prayer is being looked upon, and actually taught to be, 'an incomprehensible experience that transcends our knowing,' through which one 'feels God's presence' or 'experiences contact with God' in an inscrutable way and on a 'higher or different level of consciousness.' Though expressions and descriptions like these are normally encountered in mysticism, idolatry, the occult, and mystical forms of men's religions, such ideas and thinking about prayer also exist 'under the umbrella of Christianity.' Sometimes even among ones known for being 'Bible-believing' and 'fundamentalists.'

However neither the tranquilizing ministry of prayer, nor prayer itself, is some unintelligent or abstract or inscrutable experience. It is not some mindless, or mind-emptying experience by which one achieves a state of

mental relaxation and inner peace. Hence it is not a yoga-like exercise or practice. Nor is it a transcendental meditation of any kind. Neither is it some process for the abstraction, or the distraction, of the mind; nor a practice involving the concentration of the mind by which a mind-over-matter state is reached, through which our disquieting thoughts and overwrought emotions are mastered. Nor is it a relaxation technique; or a calming exercise.

The tranquilizing ministry of prayer is also not some mystical, mysterious, and unexplainable experience. It is not an ethereal thing, which is beyond comprehension; or something that takes place unconsciously, passively, magically, or subliminally. Hence it is not an experience in which you just let the Spirit of God infuse you with a calming sensation, as you shut out all outside distractions and concerns by focusing upon God in prayer; intoning His holy name, letting go, and feeling the Spirit take control.

Instead the tranquilizing ministry of prayer is a function of what prayer itself is: i.e. intelligent, communicative communion and fellowship with God based upon specific knowledge that God has given to us in His word. There is nothing abstract, inscrutable, or mystical about it. In accordance with this, the tranquilizing ministry of prayer is the product of intelligent, thoughtful communion with God, by which our minds are actively occupied with knowledge, understanding, and thoughts that God has designed to produce peace. To put it more pointedly, the tranquilizing ministry of prayer is the product of specifically designed living words of the living God effectually working within us to displace what is disturbing our inner man and replacing it with intelligent Godly thinking that produces peace.

Once again, there is nothing abstract, mystical, or mysterious to this. Instead both prayer itself and its tranquilizing ministry are functions of the

intelligent, information-based functioning of our inner man, which God has designed to be both the source and the foundation for the Godly lives that He has purposed us to live with Him.

Accordingly, therefore, prayer and its tranquilizing ministry are functions of *Godly thinking*. With this being so, the mechanics of prayer's tranquillity are easily described. Indeed they are just what Isaiah declared to Israel in Isaiah 26:3 regarding God's provision for the peace of their inner man, ...

³ Thou wilt keep *him* in perfect peace, *whose mind is stayed on thee*: because he trusteth in thee. (Isaiah 26:3)

So it is then that as we intelligently and doctrinally commune with our Father in prayer, it functions to keep our minds and hearts sober and sound in godliness, instead of the opposite. Through prayer we deliberately and pointedly hold ourselves accountable to sound doctrine that we have learned as "sons." In so doing "the doctrine which is according to godliness" controls and governs our thinking; stabilizing it, adjusting it, and thereby settling our minds and hearts.

Moreover this is something that prayer does especially when our minds and hearts have become unsettled by some situation, circumstance, or event with the result that we are upset, disturbed, distressed, and lacking inner peace. This, once again, is prayer's tranquilizing ministry. And it is something that we should deeply appreciate and enjoy when we are experiencing any of the afflictions belonging to "the sufferings of this present time" and/or any of "the sufferings of Christ."

Godly Peace

Now as was previously stated, specific living words of the living God are designed by God to effectually work within us to displace what is disturbing our inner man and replace it with Godly thinking that produces

peace. And indeed this is accomplished by *specific living words of the living God*. In fact they are the very same words that live and operate in God's own mind. They are the very words that form and comprise His thinking about us and about our situation, which in turn has Him in a state of peace and contentment regarding us.

It may seem almost silly to put it this way, but the truth of the matter is that neither God our Father, nor the Lord Jesus Christ, nor the Spirit of God within us, become distressed when we encounter and experience disturbing situations. With God there is no onset of anxiety or worry; no racing of the mind; no 'fight or flight response'; no wringing of the hands, pacing of the floor, sleepless nights, or any other product of distress and uneasiness of mind. Instead our Father, our Lord, and the Spirit within us, are at peace within themselves regarding us.

Yet this is not simply because God is God, and anything but contentment is impossible for Him. For though God is God, He is not a detached, impersonal, or unaffected God, as He clearly testifies. Rather He has a direct, interactive and personal relationship with His creation as a whole, and more specifically with His people. Because of this God is personally affected by what occurs, having not only purposed and designed for this to be so, but also having enabled it to be so. And this is true both in His program with Israel and with us in this present dispensation of His grace. With this being so God acts and reacts with real actions and reactions; not merely with sentiments that are anthropomorphisms in description, but not true sentiments in nature. For God is not only the "true" God, He is also the "living God." As such God lives and has a living, involved relationship both to us and with us. So much so that He is neither a casual, nor detached, nor unaffected observer of us or of what occurs with us. Instead God is genuinely touched by us and by what occurs with us; and this is true

and real with God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the Holy Ghost that dwells in us.

So it is, therefore, that God is genuinely touched by any and all of the disturbing and distressing things that we may encounter in our lives.

Now though God is genuinely affected by them, He is not disturbed and distressed by them. For operating within Him is some particular peace-producing and peace-maintaining knowledge, which is the product of His own counsel and purpose regarding us as His "sons." And on the basis of this particular knowledge God thinks differently about our situations and circumstances than we do. Hence His mind generates responses to our situ-

...neither God our Father, nor the Lord Jesus Christ, nor the Spirit of God within us, become distressed when we encounter and experience disturbing situations.

ations that differ from those that are typically generated by our natural minds. Consequently with this particular knowledge operating within Him, God is not distressed regarding us. Instead, He is at peace and content.

Godly Peace from "The God of Peace"

Now it is God's own brand of peace that He not only offers to us, but expects us to receive and operate upon in our lives. In connection with this, what the Lord said to His disciples in the climactic stage in Israel's program is also true regarding us in this present dispensation.

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. (John 14:27)

The peace that God provides for us to have in this present dispensation is also "not as the world giveth." It too is "my peace"; i.e. God's own peace.

Furthermore just as the peace that the Lord gave to the remnant of Israel comes from specific information and knowledge about God's counsel and purpose with them in the climactic stage of their program, so too does our peace come from specific knowledge and information regarding God's counsel and purpose with us as His "sons" in this present dispensation. Through both general and specific information thereon God provides us with the ability to possess the very thinking and understanding that He operates upon regarding us. This makes it so that when we likewise think what He thinks, and understand what He understands, it effectually produces within us the same peace and contentment that it produces in Him.

Therefore when this is the case with us we not only have peace from "the God of peace," but we truly have *Godly peace*. That is, we have the very same peace that God Himself possesses.

Let's appreciate the reality of this by briefly considering some examples of it. First in God's program with Israel. Then we will deal with *our Godly peace* today.

Godly Peace in God's Program with Israel

The book of Psalms deals with many of the distressing, worrisome, and dreadful situations that the remnant of Israel will experience throughout the climactic stage in Israel's program. In particular, as their program enters its final installment, the intense afflictions that will come upon them will have the tendency to easily overwhelm them and drive them to despair. Indeed, this will be one of the objectives of the Adversary's persecution as he works to 'wear them out' and have their hearts fail them in their stand for the truth.

However they will not be ‘in a lurch.’ For they will have much knowledge from God’s word upon which to operate at that time. Knowledge that is specifically designed to produce peace and stability within them in the very situations they find themselves, and knowledge that does this by being specifically about God’s counsel and purpose with them during that time. Hence, as the following examples show, it will be by having their minds occupied with this specific knowledge, and communing with God about it in prayer, that they will have the peace that the Lord promised them when He said to them,...

¹⁹ In your patience possess ye your souls. (Luke 21:19)

God has given them specific knowledge and information for ‘their patience.’ And when they operate upon it, and hold themselves accountable to it in prayer, they will be able to ‘possess their souls’ and be at peace within.

Note the reality of this, for example, in Psalm 94.

¹⁷ Unless the LORD *had been* my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence.

¹⁸ When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O LORD, held me up.

¹⁹ In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul. (Psalm 94:17–19)

This Psalm has the final installment in God’s program with Israel in view. In that time the remnant of Israel will be experiencing the temporary ‘triumphing of the wicked’ described in the beginning of the Psalm, along with all of the afflictions that they will experience as that apparent ‘triumphing’ takes place. However during that time there is a specific doctrine that God expects the remnant to have learned, and hence to have operating within them. This is the doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ functioning as Israel’s Avenger, fulfilling the third mandate of the Davidic Covenant. By

its effectual working within them it is designed to give them the clear understanding of what is happening at that time and why. It teaches them about God’s counsel and specific purpose with them during that time, including why the wicked are allowed to triumph to the extent they will and the wisdom of God in connection with it. As such this specific knowledge is designed to be the subject of their prayers and their cries to God for vengeance, as the ‘triumphing’ is underway and the afflictions are experienced.

Wherefore as this specific knowledge of God’s counsel works effectually within them, the Psalmist declares,...

...there is tranquillity, rest, and even delight for their souls as their prayers hold them accountable to the specific doctrine that God has given to them...

¹² Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law;

¹³ That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked. (Psalm 94:12–13)

So then when the distress of this particular situation becomes overwhelming for the believing remnant during that time, as the Psalmist says there is tranquillity, rest, and even delight for their souls as their prayers hold them accountable to the specific doctrine that God has given to them for this situation and it effectually works within them.

Hence as the Psalmist says, “*In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul*”; with those “comforts” being the specific

knowledge from the law about the Lord being their Avenger at that time.

A similar type testimony is found earlier on in Psalm 55 and Psalm 61 in connection with some different afflictions.

¹⁶ As for me, I will call upon God; and the LORD shall save me.

¹⁷ Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.

¹⁸ He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle *that was* against me: for there were many with me. (Psalm 55:16–18)

¹ Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer.

² From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock *that is* higher than I. (Psalm 61:1–2)

Though physical deliverance from particularly horrifying threats of harm and affliction is the main subject of each of these Psalms, so also is the deliverance of the remnant’s inner man from the horror and great distress caused by those threats. Hence when their inner man is “overwhelmed” by being beset with the heart-failing distress caused by these threats, there is peaceful deliverance for them to enjoy. They will be able to have their ‘soul delivered in peace’ by the specific doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ being their Deliverer, (which is the doctrinal context and subject of these two Psalms), as it effectually works within them, and they make the details of it the matter of their intelligent prayers.

Take note of another example of the tranquilizing ministry of intelligent prayer. This time from Psalm 116.

¹ I love the LORD, because he hath heard my voice *and* my supplications.

² Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon *him* as long as I live.

³ The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.

⁴ Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.

⁵ Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.

⁶ The LORD preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me.

⁷ Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee. (Psalm 116:1–7)

Here the Psalmist deals with the great distress that members of the remnant will experience when they are threatened with death if they continue their testimony of the truth. And indeed the opposition will work hard to produce such great intimidating distress within them. However when it occurs they will be able to say along with the Psalmist, “Return unto thy rest, O my soul.” And this is the very state to which their soul will return through the tranquilizing ministry of prayer, as they believe a particular doctrine about facing such death that God has given to them, and they like the Psalmist intelligently commune with the LORD about it in prayer.

Our Godly Peace Today

The same is true with us today. When we too through prayer intelligently commune with our Father about specific matters of His counsel and purpose with us as His “sons,” it effectually works within us to displace disturbing thoughts about what may be happening to us and have them replaced with the Godly thinking that produces peace.

For this reason after our sonship edification gets underway in Romans 8:14ff, and we are taught the fundamentals of God’s specific counsel and purpose with us as His “sons” in this present dispensation, we are then immediately exhorted to make use of that knowledge as we encounter the inevi-

table “sufferings of this present time” and tribulations of this life. Hence, for example, in Romans 12:12 we are told to be,...

¹² Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; (Romans 12:12)

Through what we are taught regarding God’s counsel and purpose with us in this present dispensation we learn about the particular “hope” in which we should be “rejoicing.” We also are taught to understand and appreciate a number of specific, fundamental reasons why we should be “patient in tribulation” when it occurs in our lives. Hence when such tribulation does occur, the issue for us is to think on the things that we are taught regarding God’s counsel and purpose with us, and to commune with our Father about them by being “instant in prayer” in connection with them.

Now when we do occupy our minds with this information, and do intelligently commune with our Father about our tribulation specifically in the light of this information, it effectually works to produce within us the Godly peace that our Father Himself has regarding our situation. The tranquilizing ministry of prayer occurs within us as the disturbing and distressing thoughts that we have in response to the tribulation are displaced by the effectual working of God’s word regarding us, making it so that our thoughts become the same as our Father’s thoughts, and thereby producing Godly peace within us.

And not only so, but Godly peace is able to be effectually produced within us throughout the entire range of sufferings, afflictions, tribulations, and trouble to which we can be subject in this present dispensation. Nothing is outside its range, or beyond its capacity. For it is produced within us by the excellency of the power of God’s word to us, which in perfect accordance with God’s counsel and purpose regarding us has been specifically

written to address and deal with every form of suffering to which we are subject as His “sons.”

Wherefore even when it comes to facing the extreme tribulations belonging to the policy of evil against us, as was the case when Paul wrote to the saints in Philippi, the tranquilizing ministry of prayer is effectual. Hence as they faced death and were being ‘terrified by their adversaries,’ Paul said to them,...

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.

⁵ Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

⁶ Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

⁷ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:4–7)

Indeed our Father is “the God of peace.” He truly has provided for us to have His peace — Godly peace — in all areas of our lives. Both within and without; from mild disturbances to the most extreme occurrences of carefulness, anxiety, or distress.

May it be that through our sonship edification and sonship prayer, as we learn both general and specific matters regarding God’s counsel and purpose with us and commune with Him about them in prayer, that we truly learn to know our Father and love Him as “the God of peace” that He is, and thereby possess peace “always by all means.” Especially may this be so as we frequently encounter and experience any of the common “sufferings of this present time,” but more so as we are privileged to bear any of “the sufferings of Christ.” — K.R. Blades

1. See the main article in the First Quarter 2003 edition of *The Enjoy The Bible Quarterly* for a more detailed description of prayer.

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“rightly dividing the word of truth” II Timothy 2:15

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