

# SHALOM

A Study of the Biblical Concept of Peace



by Donald E. Gowan

*presented by*

*the* KERYGMA   
— *program* —

*Bringing Scripture to Life for 25 years*

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## Preface

In light of recent developments in the United States, the Middle East and Europe which have generated a renewed concern for world *peace* and stability, Kerygma is pleased to release this revised edition of *Shalom: A Study of the Biblical Concept of Peace* in a new CD format. Although the basic content remains the same, an effort has been made to recognize contemporary issues throughout the study. In addition, we have updated the biblical quotations to be consistent with *The New Revised Standard Version* which is the translation upon which all recent Kerygma studies have been based.

We have supplemented each session with “Guidelines for Study” which include “Background from the Author,” “Questions for Reflection,” and “For Further Study”. The last section entitled, “For Groups,” offers exercises for interactive group exploration of key Biblical texts and issues. Finally, a section entitled, “Preparing to Lead Shalom Bible Study Groups” provides additional guidance for using all the available resources to craft lively group sessions. In all, these sections are intended to assist you in gaining the maximum benefit from the study whether you use it individually or with a group. Also, we hope pastors will find a valuable resource for preaching in the material presented by Dr. Gowan.

However you use *Shalom: A Study of the Biblical Concept of Peace*, your comments on the study will be appreciated. Contact the Kerygma office by phone: (800-KERYGMA), email ([explore@kerygma.com](mailto:explore@kerygma.com)) or through our website ([www.kerygma.com](http://www.kerygma.com)).

Richard A. Ray

General Editor

## Foreword

The biblical concept chosen for this study is used so widely and in such significant ways in the scriptures that the sessions which follow represent far more than a word-study. The Hebrew word *shalom* and its New Testament counterpart, *eirene*, can almost be used as a central theme around which to organize a biblical theology. Nothing quite so ambitious is being attempted in this course, but you will find that the texts to which this concept leads will challenge you to think deeply about essential theological and ethical questions.

This study is designed as a guide to reading the biblical material with fresh insight and new understanding. Each session contains eight to ten pages of text and all biblical passages are identified clearly. The resource contains all the necessary information to enable you to tailor your exploration to your own individual or group study needs.

The material is organized topically and does not move in any chronological order through the Testaments. As a result, you will find that both Testaments are dealt with in many sessions. You should also not be surprised to discover that the course begins and ends with the Old Testament and focuses on the New Testament in the middle. The reason is that the Old Testament expressions of hope for *peace* coincide so well with ours that they make an appropriate conclusion to the work.

The study develops in this way:

1. Sessions 1 and 2 present the Hebrew and Greek words for *peace* as they were used in daily speech, omitting the passages which have strong theological content.
2. Sessions 3-5 introduce the theological dimensions of *peace* as God's intention for this world and then move to the human dilemma, which can be expressed as the loss of *peace*.
3. Sessions 6-8 deal with the New Testament passages which use *peace* as a virtual synonym for "gospel," summing up all the benefits which the coming of Christ has brought to humanity.

4. Sessions 9-11 take up the ethical implications of the gift of *peace*, recognizing that as Christ came to bring *peace* on earth, so also his followers are called to be *peacemakers*.
5. Sessions 12-14 raise the question of unfulfilled hopes for *Shalom* for Israel, the presence of continuing conflict on earth despite the coming of Christ, and the theological and ethical importance of continuing to hope for *peace*.

All quotations from scripture are taken from the New Revised Standard Version, except where otherwise noted.

## Introducing Donald E. Gowan

Donald E. Gowan is retired from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, where he taught for 35 years and was Robert Cleveland Holland Professor of Old Testament. He is a minister in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and served churches in the Midwest as well as teaching at North Texas State University. He graduated from the University of South Dakota with a degree in mathematics, and worked for the General Electric Company at the Hanford Atomic Products Operation (Richland, Washington) for three years before going to seminary. He is a graduate of the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary and received his Ph.D. from the Divinity School at the University of Chicago.

Dr. Gowan has published nine books on Old Testament studies, the most recent of which are *Theology in Exodus: Biblical Theology in the Form of a Commentary* and *Theology of the Prophetic Books: The Death and Resurrection of Israel*. He is the author of the commentary on Amos in *The New Interpreter's Bible*, and has written another study for the Kerygma Program, *Exodus: Gateway To The Bible*.

He and his wife Darlene have two children and two grandchildren. He intends to use his years in retirement for continuing his research and writing with more time for enjoying music, woodworking, and gardening.



## Introduction

# What Do We Mean When We Say "Peace?"

This is the study of an idea. In English we call it "*peace*," but there is also a Hebrew word we like to use, which is generally equivalent to our English term. It is the word *Shalom*! In modern usage this term has become almost as common as "have a nice day." But *shalom* comes from the Bible and is far more than a pleasant expression of good wishes. It is a theological term of broad significance: hence, a whole course on the idea of *shalom*.

*Shalom* means a good deal more than our English word "*peace*," as you will soon discover. Since it is the idea of *peace* which leads us to be interested in the term in the first place, however, it seems appropriate to begin with what we know about that familiar word "*peace*."

What do we mean when we say "*peace*?" That's not a hard question to answer; all of us can begin to define it. But *peace* doesn't always mean exactly the same thing every time we say it; the word has an important range of meaning. Therefore, to ask the question "What does the English word '*peace*' mean?" is a useful way to begin studying the Biblical concept of *shalom*. Here are some examples to start your thinking:

- "War makes rattling good history; but peace is poor reading." (Thomas Hardy)
- "Europe is in danger of plunging into a cold peace." (Boris Yeltsin)
- "Rest in Peace" is a familiar tombstone inscription.
- "Will you please leave me in peace?" the distraught mother said.

- "Now may the peace of God which passes all understanding."
- "The Negro's great stumbling block in the stride toward freedom is not the White Citizens Councillor or the Ku Klux Klanner but the white moderate who is more devoted to order than justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice." (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

Does *peace* mean the same thing in each of these contexts? Not exactly. But we understand them all. It might be useful at the beginning of this study for you to try to classify the ways the word has been used so far and to see how much further you can go in thinking of common ways it is used in daily speech. Or perhaps you can come up with some not so common ways. Then analyze how they are related to one another.

Here is what one dictionary says about *peace*. It may help you to start your classification, but it really doesn't tell the whole story:

### *peace*

1. a pact or agreement to end hostilities, between those who have been at war or in a state of hostility. 2. A state of tranquility or quiet; esp. a. Freedom from civil disturbance or war; b. Public order or security as provided by law; as, a breach of the peace. 3. Harmony in personal relations; mutual concord. 4. Freedom from fears, agitating passions, moral conflict, etc. 5. One who or that which makes or maintains peace. (What did the lexicographer mean by that? Is he getting theological? Could it be a reference to the New Testament: "He is our peace" in Ephesians 2:14? Where does the New Testament's "peace of God" fit into the dictionary definition?)

It's a good word, *peace*. Think for a bit about how much of what we hope for in life is summed up in the word. But let's be realistic about it, and as complete as possible. Think also about the things which make life good for you which can by no stretch of the imagination be connected with *peace*. You might include professional football, for example, or the restless urge for greater

achievement. The English word does, however, sum up a good many of our deepest human desires for life.

### **Peace In the Old Testament**

Now let's move a step further toward our real subject. The word *shalom* is one of the few Hebrew words which is well known and widely understood by English speaking people. There are probably only two better-known Hebrew words: Amen and Hallelujah. If you say "*Shalom!*" to people when parting from them, what do you mean by that? If someone says it to you, what do you think he has said? Perhaps you know it's something good, with no insult intended, maybe just a sort of vague expression of well-wishing. Or very likely you automatically translate it as a wish for "*peace.*" Which of the definitions of the English word *peace* properly belong to *shalom*? The answer, when we look to the Old Testament to see what the biblical writers meant by the word, is: *shalom* includes all the meanings we have discussed so far, plus a lot more. In this introduction, we'll just sample a few of those uses to convince ourselves what an important word *shalom* is in the Bible. Then in the next lesson, we shall work through it with some care.

*Shalom* is the climax of the priestly benediction in Numbers 6:24-26, summing up, it would seem, the best one can expect from God:

The Lord bless you and keep you;

The Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you;

The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you shalom.

It is also the climax of Isaiah's description of the coming righteous king, providing for Christians one of their favorite titles for Jesus:

And he is named

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,

Everlasting Father, Prince of shalom. (Isaiah 9:6)

It is used, in parallel with "light," as a symbol for all that is good:

I form light and create darkness,  
I make *shalom* and create woe,  
I the Lord, do all these things. (Isaiah 45:7)

Ezekiel sums up God's promise of a blessed future with:

I will make a covenant of *shalom* with them;  
It shall be an everlasting covenant with them;  
And I will bless them and multiply them. (Ezekiel 37:26)

### **Peace in the New Testament**

This is a brief sampling of the approximately 250 uses of *shalom* in the Hebrew Bible. It does not occur at all, of course, in the Greek New Testament. There is a Greek word, however, which is almost its exact equivalent in meaning. We don't use it at all in daily speech, as we use *shalom*, but it is not quite so strange to us as it appears at first glance. The word is *eirene* (pronounced eye-RAY-nay). The woman's name, Irene, is our mispronunciation of that very word (those who say "Ireenee" get closer to it). When we say that a person is "irenic," meaning *peaceful* or *conciliatory*, we are of course using a derivative from that same Greek word. Even though it is not a word which is familiar to most people, we can use it in this course alongside *shalom*, since it does have some associations with our own language.

*Eirene* is a potent word in the New Testament. The angels use it to announce the birth of Jesus:

Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth *eirene* among those whom he favors. (Luke 2:14)

It is virtually equivalent to the gospel in Acts 10:36:

You know the message which he sent to the people of Israel,  
preaching *eirene* by Jesus Christ.

It becomes part of the standard greeting of most letters in the New Testament. For example:

Grace to you and *eirene* from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 1:7)

It is the heart of a blessing which we use to this day in worship:

And the *eirene* of God, which surpasses all understanding,  
will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.  
(Philippians 4:7)

In its approximately 90 occurrences in the Greek New Testament, *eirene* is used in most of the same ways that *shalom* is used in the Old Testament. However, it takes on a new flavor as a term which is now defined by what God has done for human beings through Jesus Christ. In many a passage the gospel, the good news, is precisely the message of *peace*.

### **Unusual Uses**

This brief sampling of some of the more striking occurrences of *shalom* and *eirene* has been intended to allay any doubts about whether a study of the concepts they represent is important enough for a whole course of study. It is. You haven't seen anything yet. But one might grant that the ideas they convey are very important and go on to ask a different question: Aren't these ideas obvious? We all understand what *peace* means. We have heard those benedictions from Numbers 6 and Philippians 4 all our lives, and it's surely not so hard to appreciate the promise of *peace* with God and with our fellow human beings. What is there to study?

There are two answers to this question. First, the subject is important enough and broad enough that no one can ever really exhaust it. The proof of that must come in succeeding sessions. The other answer is that it's not all so obvious after all. When we come to the material on "Blessed are the *peacemakers*," that will become only too clear; but in the meantime, consider some of the surprising uses of *shalom*:

And David asked him concerning the shalom of Joab, and the shalom of the people, and the shalom of the war. (2 Samuel 11:7; my translation.)

(The peace of war?)

So he (Gideon) said to the people of Penuel, "When I come back in shalom, I will break down this tower." (Judges 8:9)

(That's peaceful?)

But he was wounded for our transgressions,  
crushed for our iniquities;  
upon him was the punishment of our shalom,  
and by his bruises we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5)

(What does punishment have to do with peace?)

You see, some of the Old Testament uses of *shalom* aren't so obvious, but with a little study most of them can be understood easily enough. They aren't transparent, but neither are they completely mysterious.

The New Testament contains some surprising texts, as well. Why do we call Jesus "Prince of Peace" when he said,

Do not think that I have come to bring *eirene* on earth;

I have not come to bring *eirene*, but a sword. (Matthew 10:34)

Indeed, "*peace*" sounds strangely militant in a few New Testament texts:

The God of *eirene* will shortly crush Satan under your feet.

(Romans 16:20)

And in Ephesians 6:13-15 the "gospel of *eirene*" is part of the whole armor of God, with which one is enabled to "withstand in the evil day."

The fact is the words *shalom* and *eirene* simply mean more than our word "*peace*" does. We can't just automatically substitute our word for the Biblical terms every time and find that a passage makes sense. One of the first tasks in our study, then, is to be sure we have covered the whole range of meanings of *shalom* and *eirene*, so that whenever we read the words we will know what they mean, and will not be puzzled by some of the unusual occurrences. Here some comments about English translations may be helpful.

### **Tips about Translation**

Especially in the Old Testament, words other than "*peace*" are often appropriately used to translate the biblical term. For example, in Genesis 43:27 the Hebrew reads, "And he (Joseph) asked of them (his brothers) concerning *shalom*, and he said, 'Is your father *shalom*?' " That is good idiomatic Hebrew, but it is not good English, so the New Revised Standard Version translates properly. "And he inquired about their *welfare*, and said 'Is your father well?'" Thus you will occasionally find these sessions referring you to a passage where you can't find any sign of the word "*peace*" in your English translation. It won't be a mistake. Either you may take my word for it that *shalom* and *eirene* lie behind the translation, or you may check it in the old concordances to the King James Version by Young or Strong, which contain keys to the original Greek and Hebrew words.

We shall encounter difficult texts on which a great deal of scholarly effort has been expended. The aim of these sessions will be to make the issues of interpretation clear, to present as concisely as possible the main explanations which have been offered, including their strengths and weaknesses, and then to suggest the implications for our faith and action of one alternative or another.

Having mentioned action, I must also warn you that another kind of difficulty may arise. You may have been attracted to this study because you are deeply concerned about issues of world *peace*. You may already have seen from this first session that "*peace*" in the Bible includes a great deal more than that. But "world *peace*" is part of it. Or, you may be a bit suspicious of a study on "*peace*," tending to equate it with pacifism. It is surely one of the ironies of our time that "*peace*" is always a good word, but "*peacemaking*" tends to arouse some feelings of alarm.

When one denomination adopted *peacemaking* as a major concern, a minister commented that talking to his congregation about "*peacemaking*" on the international level was likely to produce immediate conflict in the church. *Shalom* is, thus, not only a key Biblical term representing a central teaching of the Jewish and Christian faiths, it is also potentially a controversial idea. Those who tend to equate it automatically with pacifism or questions about disarmament, however, should be assured that there is far more to it than that in the Bible. This is all the more reason for us to understand what the Bible does and does not say about *shalom*, what God is doing about it, and what God expects us to do.

# Guidelines for Study

## Background from the Author

Session 1 should start you thinking about the English word "*peace*." It appears that all the English uses correspond to ways *shalom* and *eirene* are used in the Bible. In addition, there are other meanings for the words *shalom* and *eirene* which are not used for the English word "*peace*." So, the breadth of the meaning of the English word will be considered as a first step toward thinking about the importance of the term theologically.

The Old Testament part of the word study uses only the noun *shalom* (also used at times as an adjective or an adverb) and does not include any of the uses of the related verb. The verb sometimes does mean "to make *peace*," but it has other uses which do not seem to be related to the noun at all. It seems better, therefore, to omit any consideration of the verb. It would not add anything to the thematic study, and it might tend to complicate matters.

If you know the Old Testament, you may wonder about the omission of any discussion of the "*peace*-offerings." They are omitted for essentially the same reasons. Although related to *shalom* (the word is *shelamim*) the reason for the name of that particular sacrifice is still debated. An effort to explain the so-called *peace* offerings would only lead through several conflicting theories, without making any real contribution to the understanding of the theme of the course.

## Questions for Reflection

1. List as many uses for the English word "*peace*" as you can. Can you think of at least four synonyms for the English word "*peace*?"
2. Reviewing the Old Testament examples in this session, can you develop a working definition of the term *shalom*?

3. Reviewing the New Testament examples in this session, can you develop a working definition of the term *eirene*?
4. Review the section "Unusual Uses." Does this help you grasp the breadth of meanings for the words *shalom* and *eirene*?

### **For Further Study**

1. Using a concordance, locate as many uses of the word *shalom* in the Old Testament and *eirene* in the New Testament as you can.
2. Compare the following passages in several different versions of the Bible: 2 Samuel 11:7; Judges 8:9; Isaiah 53:5; Matthew 10:34; Romans 16:20. Do these versions clarify or confuse the meaning for you?

### **For Groups**

Click the "For Groups" Bookmark to the left, or go to Page 162.

There are many ways to categorize questions. In all the categorizations there seem to be generally three different types or levels of questions.

**Type One: Information Questions.** Questions of this type assume that there are right answers. As a result of remembering the information or the facts related to a subject, persons are able to give the correct answers when called upon. Information questions tend to be limited in their ability to provoke exploration or discussion by the group. When leaders ask too many information questions, the participants may feel as if they are taking a test. People often sense that leaders have all the answers to the questions they ask, so it is important to have the right answer to please the leader. Information is very important for setting the context for studying a subject; however, there are many ways to present information besides asking questions. Some examples of information questions:

“In what city were followers of Jesus first called Christians?”

“Where in a town did the Apostles often go first to present the gospel message?”

**Type Two: Interpretation Questions.** Interpretation questions require participants to think about, analyze, explore, and evaluate a subject. Based upon previous experience, available information, or a given situation, class members are guided to reflect on the experience or information in an interpretive or analytical way. Interpretation questions are open-ended. Several people can be asked the same interpretive question, each can offer a different answer, and each answer can be acceptable. Analytical questions assume that there is a variety of points of view, that the leader has no correct answer in mind and that together, the leader and class members will find the question worthy of their time and thoughtfulness. Questions of this type motivate people to think and express them and to become more involved in the class session. Analytical questions can be introduced with various phrases:

“What are some reasons ....?”

“Why do you suppose ....?”

“Let’s think a minute about why ...”

“What are some examples of ...?”

“What is the possibility of ...?”

“Who do you think will ...?”

“What are the alternatives for ...?”

“What are your thoughts about ...?”

Some examples of interpretation questions:

“What are some reactions Jesus’ followers in Antioch might have had to be called Christians?”

“Why do you suppose Peter, Paul, and other often went first to the synagogue to preach in a new town?”

**Type Three: Personalized Questions.** With personalized or identification questions, leaders encourage class members to apply the subject to themselves in a personal way that helps them express their own identify. Information and interpretation questions can be impersonal – unrelated to the participant’s interests or values. Personalized questions are designed to help people express their own values, commitments, choices, or affirmations regarding a particular subject or issue. Personalized questions guide the class members to invest something of themselves as they identify with persons, events, or situations of a past, present, or figure time frame. A discussion of value questions moves out of the hypothetical and abstract arena into a very real and personal space. Questions at this level are essential if persons are going to grow in their faith and life commitments. In using questions of this type we must be careful to avoid embarrassing persons by getting too personal or putting them “on the spot.”

Some examples of personalized questions:

“When someone identifies you as a Christian, what are some feelings or reactions you have?”

“If you had been a member of the synagogue in Ephesus when Paul came to preach, how do you think you would have responded to his message?”

When preparing to lead a discussion that utilizes a variety of questions there are at least ten guidelines that will be helpful to keep in mind:

1. Ask questions that are more open than closed. Questions with only one right answer or employing a “yes” or “no” response are more closed. These questions are more a test of memory than they are inquiry into a subject matter. When tempted to ask a closed question, make a statement instead. Then ask open, analytical, probing questions.
2. Ask only one question at a time. More than one question is confusing to the participants. Leaders who ask several questions at once usually have not thought carefully or prepared adequately and are “fishing” for the right question.
3. Present questions to the whole class. Instead of putting one person “on the spot” by directing a question to one, offer the question to the whole class. By being aware of a person’s readiness you may be able to recognize who wants to answer. A participant can be called upon to respond without the teacher’s speaking a word – through eye contact, gesture with the hand, or nod of the head.
4. Provide feedback after a person responds. The leader can reinforce participants and facilitate further discussion by providing verbal and nonverbal feedback so that they will know the leader has heard and received the response.
5. After an initial question and response, follow up with probing questions. Probing questions lead to further inquiry and exploration in depth of the subject. Probing questions can also provide a degree of reinforcement and feedback.
6. After asking a question, be silent. After best “next step” after making a question is to be silent. If the question is clearly stated, and if the class members have sufficient data to answer, they need some time to think. Ten seconds is not too much time. However, ten seconds of silence can feel like an eternity to a leader who is a little anxious. Leave the

burden of the silence on the group. Bite your tongue and relax; usually someone will respond.

7. Use an inquiry style rather than an interrogation style. Inquiry is a style or approach that says to the class members, “I’m interested in what you think and say.” Interrogation puts persons on the defensive and inhibits their ability to think and express themselves creatively.
8. Encourage people to ask their own questions. Questions are not just the property of the leader but can also be used effectively by class members.
9. Avoid echoing participants’ responses. There are two reasons for repeating participants’ responses: to reinforce an answer and to state it loud enough so that others who might have missed it the first time can hear.
10. Accept responses as if they were gifts. When people venture an answer to a question they are risking something of themselves. Every person hopes his or her answers will be accepted. They will feel more confident to respond to open questions than to closed questions. Also, leaders will be more able to accept response to open questions. We are not always perfectly pleased with every gift we receive, but we are usually gracious in receiving even the ones we are not pleased with.

# Session 1 – For Groups



## What Do We Mean When We Say “Peace”?

**Note:** Nametags will probably be helpful if there are any in the group who are new. You can create nametags using one of the familiar *peace* symbols, such as a dove, or allow the participants to create their own *peace* symbol nametags. You may want to save these for future sessions.

1. Write the following “*peace* quotes” on individual 4 x 6 cards and tape them to the walls of the classroom. (You may also use the quotes included in Session 1, Pages 7 and 8.) Below each quote attach a sheet of paper. Invite the class members to read the quotes. As they read, they should note that the word *peace* is used in many different ways. On the paper below each quote, ask the participants to write a word or phrase that could replace *peace* in the quotation.

- First keep the *peace* within yourself, and then you can also bring *peace* to others  
...Thomas a Kempis
- There never was a good war or a bad *peace* .... Benjamin Franklin.
- All we are saying is give *peace* a chance .... The Beatles
- Nothing can bring you *peace* but yourself ... Ralph Waldo Emerson
- Let there be *peace* on earth and let it begin with me ... Jill Jackson-Miller
- If you are yourself at *peace*, then there is at least some *peace* in the world. Then share your *peace* with everyone, and everyone will be at *peace* ... Thomas Merton

- We make war that we may live in *peace* ... Aristotle
- I like to believe that people in the long run are going to do more to promote *peace* than are governments. Indeed, I think that people want *peace* so much that one of these days governments had better get out of their way and let them have it. ... Dwight David Eisenhower.
- In the Middle East, *peace* is not only desirable, it is essential. ... Richard Cheney

After each participant has had an opportunity to read and respond to at least four of the quotes, gather as a total group to discuss the quotes. Make a composite list on newsprint of the words or phrases that were suggested. Hang the list on the wall for use at the end of the session, and keep it for use in the next session.

2. Write the words *shalom* and *eirene* as headings for a two-column chart on the chalkboard or newsprint. Divide the class into an even number of small groups (2 to 4 persons each), assigning *shalom* to one half to of the groups and *eirene* to the other half. Give these directions to the total group:
  - a. Using a concordance, locate three biblical references to *peace*. Note that *shalom* is the word used in the Old Testament for *peace* and *eirene* is the word used in the New Testament.
  - b. Read aloud the three references in your group.
  - c. As a group, agree upon a synonym for the word *peace* in each passage. If the word *peace* does not appear in a passage cited by your concordance, it is probably because the concordance was prepared for a different translation. Note the word or phrase the translators have used for *shalom* or *eirene* in your Bible.
  - d. Prepare to share your work with the whole group.

Gather as a whole group. Invite each sub-group to present one or two of its references by first reading the verse, then sharing the synonym chosen to replace *shalom/eirene*, and finally

reading the verse with the synonym inserted. Write these synonyms for *peace* on the two-column chart under the appropriate heading.

By now it is obvious that the English word *peace*, the Hebrew word *shalom*, and the Greek word *eirene* have multiple meanings. Ask the group to discuss the difficulties this may cause when people attempt to speak about *peace*.

3. Provide five or six different Bible versions or translations to be used by the participants. Some you might want to have on hand during all the class sessions are the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), King James Version (KJV), New English Bible (NEB), New International Version (NIV), Today's English Version (TEV), and the New Jerusalem Bible (JB). Under the heading "Unusual Uses" in the *Shalom* text Dr. Gowan lists the following passages:

2 Samuel 11:7

Judges 8:9

Isaiah 53:5

Matthew 10:34

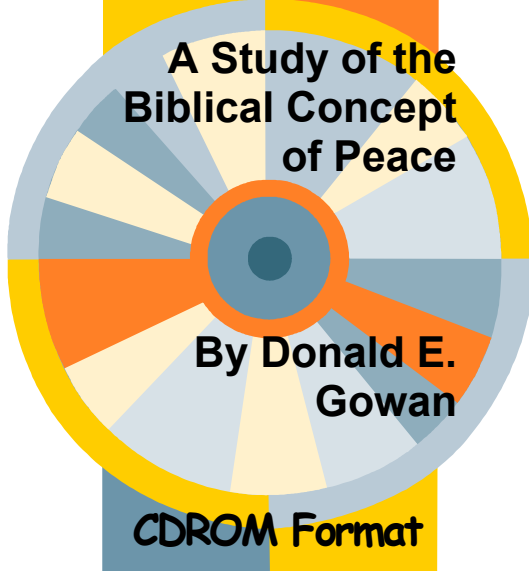
Romans 16:20

Read Dr. Gowan's translation of each of these passages on Pages 12-14. After each passage is read, invite members of the group to read the same passage in several of the Bible versions or translations mentioned above. Discuss how, or if, using different versions/translations clarifies the meaning.

### **Closing**

If your group made a list of synonyms for *peace* at the beginning of the session, read the list again slowly. As you read the list, invite the participants to meditate about their personal hopes for *peace*. You may want to weave the synonyms into a closing prayer.

# SHALOM



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