

Peace: *Eirene*: In Classical Greek: Interlude in War; Hebrew: *Shalom*: Political Deliverance; Feinberg: Jeremiah's Warnings to Judah, Jer 5:30-31; 6:13-15

39. The end result of the *dipsuchos* believer is the sin unto death. The end result for the believer whose mind-set is from the source of the Holy Spirit is capacity for life.
40. The second characteristic of the positive believer is said to be peace: *eirēnē*. Other than love: **ἀγάπη, agapē**, there is probably no word in the Bible that is more misunderstood and misapplied than this one.
41. Pacifists assume that every use of the word "peace" in Scripture is an expression of support for international diplomacy and justification for cutting military budgets.
42. A few principles on the several meanings of *eirēnē* are important to understanding our verse and others as well:
 - 1) First of all it should be understood that in Classical Greek *eirēnē* did not denote a relationship between people or an attitude of mind, but rather an "interlude in the everlasting state of war. *Eirēnē* is primarily no more than the passionately asserted, emotionally felt and palpable opposite of **πόλεμος, polemos**: war" [Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 2:401].
 - 2) In the Old Testament the Hebrew word for peace is **שָׁלוֹם, shalom** and its root meaning is "well-being." This can refer to bodily health, prosperity, stability of relationship, or political deliverance from oppression.
 - 3) Israel often engaged in spiritual adultery by gravitating to the idolatrous religions of its neighbors and as a result national discipline would begin to press down on the people.
 - 4) But the people were made drunk by a period of prosperity that was provided to the spiritually mature believers of previous generations.
 - 5) The present generation of Judah did not keep the faith but deviated into idolatry and thus were blind to the warning signs evident in current events.
 - 6) The Chaldean army of Nebuchadnezzar was on campaign and would soon lay siege to Jerusalem while the prophets and priests assured the people that peace would prevail.
 - 7) Jeremiah castigates the spiritual blindness of the people and their leaders in his concluding remarks of his prophecy's fifth chapter:

Jeremiah 5:30 - "An appalling and horrible thing has happened in the land:

v. 31 - The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule on their own authority; and My people love it so! But what will you do at the end of it?"

- 8) It is important to consider that Nebuchadnezzar's capital was located in Babylon which today is an ancient ruin located in southern Iraq. Charles Feinberg's comments on the climate of sixth-century B.C. Judah and the Judeans' blasé attitude toward impending danger could just as easily be a warning to present-day America:

Feinberg, Charles L. *Jeremiah: A Commentary*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1982), 62:

Widespread social injustices cry out for God's judgment. The wicked rich have acquired their wealth by deceit [e.g., the robbing of retirement portfolios] and heartless oppression of the poor and helpless [the slavery of the Welfare State; the approved lawlessness of hiring and underpaying illegal Mexican aliens]. Prosperity did not bring piety with it. In fact, they excused their wicked deeds on the flimsiest grounds. They could not have troubled themselves less over whether the cause of the orphan was maintained [Progressive permissiveness leads to broken families that produce half orphans; Welfare produces illegitimate children with no fathers; lax punishment of child molesters enables them to molest and kill again and again.]. Jeremiah asked whether for sins like theirs, the people could possibly believe God would overlook inevitable judgment.

Jeremiah, viewing the moral wreckage, exclaims over the astonishing and horrible things transpiring in the land. Those who should have been the chief moral backbone of the nation had treacherously denied the Lord's commitment to them [politicians and preachers today]. The leaders had become misleaders [Congress is treacherous in its conciliatory attitude toward an avowed enemy.]. Foremost among the guilty were the false prophets, whose rosy predictions led the nation to its final doom in 586 B.C [Liberal churches both Catholic and Protestant protect illegal aliens, ignore the threat of the Islamic War, and denounce all military action in defence of the country—all in the name of peace.]. Next to them were the spineless priests who ruled "by their own authority" [a large cross section of religious leaders ignore the teaching of the Word of God to prosper their own autogenous domains.]. So the chapter closes with the tragic statement that those entrusted with the spiritual welfare of the nation were unworthy of their positions. Worse yet, the people were so unaware of the issues that they acquiesced in all that their leaders did [There is widespread belief in this country that Islam is a peaceful religion. It is not, yet its proponents now enjoy freedoms under the "free exercise" clause of the first amendment that are denied to Christians. Prayer in public places is being permitted in an effort to befriend and mollify a crafty enemy that is using our Constitution and our laws to infiltrate and ultimately transform our society from a representative republic into a religious tyranny under Shari'a law.]. The rampant evil did not trouble the people, who had come to accept it and favor it. They preferred indulgent leaders who made few, if any, moral demands [The moral decline and spiritual ignorance of Americans are a clear sign of impending disaster.]. The people had lost their sense of moral values and did not realize they were being duped [Progressive propaganda begins in kindergarten and the citizens of the next generation will not even be aware they have brainwashed themselves.]. They cherished their false security. But the final question is, In the time of retribution, when calamity would strike, then what would they do? Then where would their hope and confidence be?

- 9) One of the problems with sixth-century Judah and with twenty-first-century America is the delusion that we enjoy an unimpeachable political peace.

- 10) We do not! In fact, we are presently engaged in a bloodless Civil War where political and cultural ideologies wage an incessant assault against establishment and spiritual traditions. The antagonists are blind to the reality that an evil enemy is waging a tireless campaign to destroy us. This is the circumstance Jeremiah faced and his admonishments continue in chapter 6. We note its final comments which serve as a summary of Judah's and our nation's predicament:

Jeremiah 6:13 - "From the least to the greatest, all are greedy for gain; prophets and priests alike, all practice deceit.

v. 14 - "They dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious [Terrorism is viewed as an inconvenience but not a serious threat]. They say, 'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace [אֵין שְׁלוֹם] שְׁלוֹם שְׁלוֹם "Shalom, shalom, wa-'ayin shalom": "Peace, peace, when there is no peace."]

v. 15 - Are they ashamed of their loathsome conduct? No, they have no shame at all; they do not even know how to blush [Those who protest electronic intelligence gathering, promote criminal trials for terrorists rather than military tribunals, and propose surrender in Iraq are shameless examples of Judah's condition.]. So they will fall among the fallen; they will be brought down when I punish them," says the Lord.