

The Attackers: Messiah: Prince of Peace: Hebrew Word for Prince: *Sar*: Military Commander; for Peace: *Shalom*: Well-Being, Prosperity; Possible only for Believers in Christ Who Acquire the Mind of Christ; Passages on Peace: Phil 4:6–7; Rom 12:17–18; Heb 12:11; 2 Cor 13:11; 1 Cor 14:33a; 2 Thess 3:16; Rom 5:1; Gal 5:22–23; John 14:27; 2 Pet 1:2

- (4) **Prince of Peace:** This title is one of the most popular among the hundreds assigned to Messiah. There was the false hope that Jesus would somehow provide world peace following the First Advent, a notion that contributed to the broad rejection of His claims of messiahship.

The general consensus was that the Messiah would immediately institute the millennial kingdom. When He did not pursue military action against the Roman Empire, He was considered to be a false Messiah and thus accused by the Jewish hierarchy of blasphemy followed by crucifixion.

Failure to put the crown before the cross led to the problem, for example, they placed Isaiah 9:6b–7 before Isaiah 52:13–53:12.

The meaning of the Hebrew word **סר (sar)**, translated “prince,” contains nuances that contributed to the Jews’ assumption that the Messiah would achieve military victory over the Roman Empire at His First Advent.

The term *sar* may parallel a whole series of titles referring to different office-holders. Groups organized according to specific vocations include officials associated with ... members of the military (*gibbor*: [mighty God] Isa. 9:6).

The use of *sar* during the monarchy led to a general use of *sar* to refer to a member of the upper classes, which together with the frequent LXX translation of the title as *archōn* [ἄρχων, to rule; a ruler, chief, prince. ἄρχοντας [archontas]: LXX at Isa. 9:6] and the Latin translation *princeps* [first, foremost, most distinguished; head, chief, prince¹] led to a translation of the title *sar* as “prince.” After the fall of the monarchy, the Chronicler’s History uses *sar* to refer to any leadership function within tribal/clan, administrative, cultic, and military contexts. (p. 198)

The most frequent LXX translation for the title *sar* is *archōn*.² (p. 199)

A derivative of the Greek ἄρχων is **ἀρχηγός (archēgos)** and its use in the New Testament with relation to Jesus Christ supports the use of *sar* in Isaiah 9:6:

¹ R. Shorrock and D. J. Butterfield, *The Penguin Latin Dictionary* (London: Penguin Books, 2007), 228.

² H. Niehr, “סר *sar*,” in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, 14:198,199.

ἀρχηγός (*archēgos*). Originator, founder, leader, chief, first, prince, as distinguished from simply being the cause. One may be the cause of something but not the beginning. *Archē* [ἀρχή], like *archēgos*, denotes the founder as the first cause, ruler; e.g., Jesus Christ is called the *archēgos* of life (Acts 3:15) because He is *hē archē*, the beginning or the originator of God's creation (Rev. 3:14). This excludes Him from Himself being a product of that beginning. Jesus Christ is called *archēgos* the originator of faith in Heb. 12:2. He is also called the firstfruits, *aparchē* [ἀπαρχή], of them that sleep, the originator of the resurrection of those who are going to be raised from the dead. *Archēgos* occurs also in Acts 5:31.³

From these sources we are able to conclude that the word *sar*, translated "prince," refers to Jesus Christ as the commander-in-chief of the heavenly armies who is the first cause of world peace as it was enjoyed in the garden of Eden by our original parents.

Beginning with the fall of man, peace was transformed into hostility, primarily toward God and His Word, and as a corollary to this, hostility among members of the human race.

He is commander-in-chief of that body of humanity that in every generation becomes a member of his royal family through faith alone in Him alone.

He will utilize His position as King of kings and Lord of lords to administer defeat upon the angelic and human forces that threaten the Jewish people in Revelation 17:14.

He will exercise His authority as prince of true peace over the rulers of this world as indicated by John's introductory remarks in Revelation 1:

Revelation 1:5a - Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler [ἄρχων (*árchōn*)] of the kings of the earth ...

Peace is the English translation of the Hebrew noun שָׁלוֹם (*shalom*) and the Greek noun εἰρήνη (*eirēnē*).

The definitions of these two words indicate that the two are synonymous and therefore as it is understood in the Old Testament so also is its application in the New.

Some analysis of the word *shalom* and how it is used in Old Testament passages will give us insight into the true meaning of peace.

To do this we will draw from an analysis of *shalom* by Philip J. Nel in the *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* interspersing his commentary with observations on the current Zeitgeist.

³ Spiros Zodhiates, gen. ed., *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1993), 262.

The noun šālôm. In a material and secular sense šālôm designates well-being, prosperity, or bodily health (e.g., Gen 29:6; 43:27; Ps 38:3; Isa. 57:18; Jer 6:14). It also expresses the state of mind or internal condition of being at ease, satisfied, or fulfilled. In the Wisdom literature the expectation exists that someone who lives in accordance with the prescriptions of wisdom will experience a long life and peace (Prov 3:2, 17). The wicked, on the contrary, will experience no peace (Isa 48:22; 57:12; 59:8). Šālôm in such contexts designates a state of existence in accordance with Yahweh's created order.⁴

1. Notice that the basic meanings of *shalom* have to do with physical and spiritual health. The Bible's revelation regarding peace is primarily focused on an individual's personal well-being which is only possible by having a right relationship with God.
2. This means that personal well-being is not possible for anyone unless he is a believer in Jesus Christ and who has made the decision to be a serious student of the Word of God.
3. Knowing the mechanics of how to accomplish this objective is imperative and requires the leadership of a qualified pastor-teacher to direct the way by means of biblical exposition.
4. Progress is only possible by accessing the power available from God's grace provision of a supernatural teacher, namely the Holy Spirit.
5. By virtue of the fact a person is saved means he has recognized his sinful condition yet his sin nature remains a hindrance to his progress in the plan of God.
6. As his pre-salvation sins were forgiven at the point of salvation so also may his post-salvation sins be forgiven at the point of personal confession alone to God alone.
7. This results in the status quo of spirituality in which the believer, filled with the Holy Spirit, is enabled to understand the Bible's esoteric content under the Spirit's teaching ministry.
8. The filling of the Spirit adds spiritual IQ to a believer's human IQ enabling him to grow in grace through Bible study.
9. From this foundation the new believer quickly learns the basic modus operandi of the Christian way of life. However, the distractions of the devil's world often affect new believers so that they lose focus of the dedication required to learn and then apply an inventory of problem-solving devices to life and circumstances.
10. When a new believer has interest in learning God's plan he finds that his spiritual growth advances rapidly resulting in spiritual momentum.
11. Accumulation of biblical principles, doctrines, and rationales motivates the believer to continue the advance and in the process develop a personal love for God.

⁴ Philip J. Nel, "שָׁלוֹם," in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, gen. ed. Willem A. VanGemeren (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 4:131.

12. This level of spiritual growth becomes evident when the believer is able to see his fellow man in a new and different light. Others must be perceived as fallen and therefore victims of the problems typical of their inherent sin natures' insatiable lust patterns.
13. He also surmises that management of another person's failures falls under the supervision of Jesus Christ. This allows him to avoid personal prejudice, judgmental attitudes, caustic comments, and overt acts that result from reactor factors.
14. Instead, he opts for the problem-solving rationale of "live and let live" sustained by unconditional love for the individual.
15. With a mental attitude oriented to the love of God, he is able to live within an envelope of true happiness, a peaceful state of mind described in Scripture in several contexts:

Philippians 4:6 - Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

v. 7 - And the peace of God, which passes all comprehension, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Romans 12:17 - Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men.

v. 18 - If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.

Hebrews 12:11 - All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

2 Corinthians 13:11 - Finally, fellow believers, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

1 Corinthians 14:33a - God is not a God of confusion but of peace ...

2 Thessalonians 3:16 - Now may the Lord of peace Himself continually grant you peace in every circumstance.

Romans 5:1 - Having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Galatians 5:22 - The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

v. 23 - gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

John 14:27 - "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.

2 Peter 1:2 - Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.