

How God Intervenes in our lives — Personal Peace — Jehovah Shalom

Judges 6:24 NKJV So Gideon built an altar there to the Lord, and called it The-Lord-Is-Peace.

Each of us need personal peace to survive in this world. Personal peace is the freedom from oppressive thoughts or emotions. Everyone talks about peace but nothing can take the place of personal peace, especially the peace that God gives.

Why is personal peace hard to find?

First of all — circumstances are uncontrollable.

We all face circumstances that we cannot control. This past year has given evidence of this fact. Some of the things we have faced have been unimaginable. They surprised and shocked our minds and emotions.

What are we supposed to do when circumstances are uncontrollable?

These things often derail our plans and our lives. It is easy to lose patience and faith and get frustrated.

Personal peace is hard to find when:

First — when circumstances are uncontrollable

Second — when people are unchangeable

Do you know someone that resists change? You keep telling them their life would be better, if they would just change!

Have you ever tried to change someone else? You set up a “personal improvement” campaign for someone you love. You wanted your father or mother to make some necessary change. You wanted your children to change their ways. You wanted your spouse to make some necessary changes. You wanted to change your mother-in-law.

You tell them: “It’s for your own good, if you would change.” “You will be much better off, if you would just... change.”

Have any of you tried to make personal changes? Have you tried to change what you think or do? Often, even when we know that we need to change, we resist and rebel. Have the same challenges and situations resisted change?

Personal peace is hard to find when:

First — when circumstances are uncontrollable

Second — when people are unchangeable

Third — when problems are unexplainable

Have you found out that life is not fair? Every problem does not have the desired answer. Everyone does not get well. All couples do not live happily ever after. Every story does not have a happy ending. Every child does not grow up to be what parents hoped for. Many times things happen that we cannot explain. When we have unexplainable problems, it is easy to lose our peace of mind.

Here is a word from God for everyone who needs personal peace of mind.

Jehovah Shalom, the God of Peace reminds us that He wants to intervene in our lives with personal peace. We should know this, but many of us are still finding out that the God of Peace wants to help us in our times of troubles.

John 14:27 NKJV Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

John 14:27 NLT I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don’t be troubled or afraid.

Even if you have discovered His peace in the past, God wants to give His personal peace today.

How can you find personal peace?

People like David, Paul, and Job can help us find and enjoy God's peace. Although God does not promise a trouble-free life, He does promise to come to our aid in our times of trouble.

Listen to what Jesus said He would do.

John 16:33 NIV84 "I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Jesus is telling believers that as long as we are in this world we will have many trials and troubles. We have seen this in all of our lives. At the end of this verse, Jesus gives a promise that we cannot afford to miss. He said, "I have overcome the world." You can have personal peace because our peace comes from the One Who overcame the world.

How can I find this personal peace?

Accept what cannot be changed.

The path to personal peace involves accepting what cannot be changed. There are a multitude of things in life that we have no ability to change. Worrying or resenting those things will not bring peace.

The path to personal peace involves accepting what you cannot change.

David was a powerful king. He had grown accustomed to managing his life and the lives of his people, but one day his infant son fell gravely ill. For 7 days, David refused to eat or sleep. He prayed and pleaded with God day and night to save his child, but after a week the child died. David's advisors did not know what the King would do when he heard the child was dead. They were amazed when David took a bath, got dressed, ate, and went back to work.

They couldn't understand, so David explained: 2 Samuel 12:22-23 NIV "While the child was still alive, I fasted and prayed. I thought, Who knows? The Lord may be gracious and let the child live. But now that the child is dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back? I will go to him, but he will not return to me."

King David accepted what he could not change. How did he do that?

The Apostle Paul revealed the secret. He said accepting what cannot be changed is not a natural ability. In **Philippians 4:11 NCV** He said, "I have learned to be satisfied with the things I have and with everything that happens."

How do we learn to accept what we cannot change?

Paul shared his secret.

Philippians 4:12-13 NCV He said: "I have learned the secret of being happy at anytime in everything that happens when I have enough to eat and when I go hungry, when I have more than I need and when I do not have enough. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Peace comes from God as a result turning everything over to Christ Who gives us strength. What do you do if your child is out of control? What do you do if your friend or relative refuses to change? What do you do if your handicap or health problem defies explanation and cannot be cured? You do your best and then you turn to God and pray, and get strength from the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember that He has promised to be a very present help in times of trouble.

How can I find personal peace?

First — accept what cannot be changed.

Then — relinquish control to God.

Personal peace involves relinquishing control to God. Most of us want to be in control all the time.

Do you ever get frustrated when things don't work the way you planned? You know what I mean. You want to control your life and destiny. You don't want anyone else messing with you.

Have you ever wanted God to make things happen the way you wanted them to work? God has told us: "My ways are not your ways." Personal peace comes from giving up and letting Jesus take over. God's ways are always right, just, and holy.

Saul experienced the tension of releasing control to God. He was a well-educated, well-connected and had a well-defined career path. Everything in his life had been aligned for success, but God stood in his way. You know you are in trouble when you resent and resist what God wants to do in the world and in your life.

One day, the Lord Jesus literally blocked his path. He was headed down a road to carry out the plan to destroy people who disagreed with his philosophy and religion.

Acts 26:13 NCV On the way there, at noon, I saw a light from heaven. It was brighter than the sun and flashed all around me and those who were traveling with me. We all fell to the ground. Then I heard a voice speaking to me in the Hebrew language, saying, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? You are only hurting yourself by fighting me.'

The rest of the story is history. When God got the upper hand, Saul gave up the struggle and gave in to God. When he stopped resisting God, Saul's life was changed and he was filled with the Holy Spirit. When he stopped resisting God's way, the Lord took him into bigger and better things. After that encounter with Christ and he was filled with the Holy Spirit, Saul changed his name to Paul.

He described the struggle many of us face today. He wrote these words: **Romans 8:6 NIV84** The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace.

Saul had been RESISTING the Holy Spirit's control. He was attempting to do life his own way! He was a man on a mission, but his mission was resisting the Holy Spirit's control.

Later Paul said: "if we insist on controlling what we think, say, and do the result is death." If we relinquish control, and if God's Spirit controls what we think, say, and do, the result is life and peace.

Have you thought this through? If you are fighting God for the control of your life, you are going to lose. An old proverb says: "Your arms are too short to box with God."

Are you still struggling with God? Do you still think that YOUR PLANS for YOUR LIFE are the best? Are you wrestling with God for the control of your life? Are you struggling with Him because your life plan never materialized? Are you striving with God because things have not gone the way you wanted? Are you fighting with God because a physical problem never disappeared? Why not stop the struggle and terminate the tension today?

One time the Apostle Paul was in a battle with God over a thorn in his flesh. We don't know exactly what it was, but he kept asking God to take it away and nothing changed. Finally God spoke to him and said, "My grace is sufficient for you." (2 Corinthians 12:7) Peace comes when we relinquish control to God's Spirit, then there is life and peace.

How can you find personal peace?

First — Accept what cannot be changed.

Second — Relinquish control to God.

Third — The path to personal peace involves trusting God's loving care.

We all have noticed that bad things happen to good people. We have all seen it happen. A young child suddenly dies in a tragic accident. Middle-aged mothers and fathers, with families to raise, get sick, or lose their jobs. Retirement plans and pensions evaporate overnight. Health is lost or your life-long plans disintegrate before your eyes. Very often, we don't know why. Instead of getting answers, we lose our peace.

We can learn to trust God's loving care by watching a man named Job. The Bible tells us that Job was a righteous man who was always doing good.

Have you ever done everything right and nothing worked? Job was healthy, wealthy, and wise, but one day he lost everything. He lost his family, fortune, and health in one day and Job had no clue why it was happening. His friends offered counsel, but they only had poor answers and bad advice. On the other hand, it appeared that God was not interested and refused to offer help.

While Job struggled and was tried, he got no answers from God. We learn something powerful from what Job did not know. Job did not know that he was being tested. He did not know why God was silent during the test. All Job could do was believe that God had his best interest in mind. While he was struggling to find answers, he said: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him," (Job 13:15 KJV).

It was only after the test that God began giving Job the answers. It was after the test that Job found relief and healing. When you don't have answers, trust God!

The book of Philippians tells us where to find personal peace.

Philippians 4:6-7 NLT Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has done. If you do this, you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

Do you believe this? You can trust God because God knows what is best. You can trust God because He has already done what is best. We can have the same kind of trust that Job had. Job thought he might die but he was still going to trust God.

We can have personal peace because God has offered a better solution. God chose to give His Son so that you can find help and peace. He has done everything that is necessary to take care of us now and throughout all eternity. If we trust God to take care of us through eternity after we die, why shouldn't we trust Him to care for us before we die?

The path to personal peace involves trusting God's love and care now. God has promised to intervene in our lives and give us the peace that we need. Before we can experience the peace of God, we need peace with God. Have you made peace with God? Have you accepted the terms of this peace?

Saul could not find true peace and direction for his future until he stopped resisting God. When we trust Jesus and what He did for us, we not only get peace with God; we also get the peace of God. Whatever you are facing, you can know that God is able to work it all out for your good. You can know that because there is an empty cross and an empty tomb. The price has been paid so that you can have this peace.