

Shalom and Peace be with You

Thy Kingdom Come

You might be familiar with the Hebrew word shalom (pronounced sha lome) or “peace.” A common definition of peace is — the absence of conflict or war — but in Hebrew it means so much more.

“Shalom” is taken from the root word shalam, which means, “to be safe in mind, body, or estate.” It speaks of completeness, fullness, well-being, and tranquility.. In Israel today, when you greet someone or say goodbye, you say, Shalom. You are literally saying, “may you be full of well-being.”

Jesus spoke many times about peace; one notable time was right after his death, when the disciples were locked behind the doors in the Upper Room. They were terrified that as known followers of Jesus, they, too, would be crucified. Jesus himself stood among them and said “Peace be with You.”

Look at this artist’s rendering of the “Peaceable Kingdom.” What do you notice? Find the different ways peace is represented.



The Peaceable Kingdom by Edward Hicks, about 1833

Activities:

In the week ahead, have your family try using the word “Shalom” as your hello or goodbye!

At a meal, have everyone offer this blessing around the table. Person #1 shakes the hand of Person #2 and says “Peace be with you.” Person #2 responds “And Also with You.” Person #2 turns to Person #3, shakes their hand and says “Peace be with you.” Person #3 responds “And also with you.” Keep going until everyone has been blessed.

Scripture: “And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:7