

The priestly blessing that comes from this week's parsha ends with the words **וישם לך שלום** - *and (Hashem) will make peace for you.*
Why is peace the pinnacle of this blessing?

Pa'neach Razah Bamidbar 6:26

France, 13th c.

"And give you peace." He [God] concludes the Priestly Blessing with peace. This is as stated at the end of Tractate Uktzin (3:12): Rabbi Shimon ben Chalafta said, 'You have no vessel that can hold blessing other than peace,' as it is said: 'Hashem will give strength to His people; Hashem will bless His people with peace.' (Tehilim 29:11) [From his Rebbe]"

פענח רזא במדבר ו:כו

רבי יצחק בן יהודה הלוי

וישם לך שלום - סיים ברכת כהנים בשלום. כדאמרינן בשילהי מסכת עוקצין (ג:יב) אמר ר' שמעון בן חלפתא אין לך כלי שהוא מחזיק ברכה אלא שלום שנאמר ה' עוז לעמו יתן ה' יברך את עמו בשלום (תהלים כט:יא). מ"ה.

The Mishna tells us that peace is uniquely capable of holding bracha. Let's explore now other sources that highlight the importance of peace.

Rabbeinu Yonah Avos 1:12

Spain, 13th c.

Hillel says: Be of the disciples of Aharon—loving peace and pursuing peace, loving mankind and drawing them close to the Torah.

This means that one should love truth and peace in their heart and actively pursue it (with their hands). For there are some people who love peace in their hearts, yet do not trouble themselves to establish peace in the world nor walk in the paths of peace. However, those who take action and establish peace between a person and their fellow—loving the "work" of it, as it is said (Psalms 34), "Seek peace and pursue it"—they are the true disciples of Aaron, who used to act in this manner.

רבינו יונה אבות א:יב

רבי יונה בן ר' אברהם גירונדי

הלל אומר הוי מתלמידי של אהרן אוהב שלום ורודף שלום אוהב את הבריות ומקרבן לתורה. ר"ל שיאהב בלבו האמת והשלום וירדוף אחריו בפועל ידיו. כי יש בני אדם אוהבים אותו בלבם לא שיטרחו עצמן לשום שלום בעולם ואינם הולכים בדרכי שלום אך העושין פעולה ומשימין שלום בין אדם לחבירו ואוהבים לעשות המלאכה כמו שנאמר (תהלים ל"ד) בקש שלום ורדפוהו אותם הם מתלמידי של אהרן שהיה עושה כדבר הזה.

Rabbeinu Yonah tells us that we not only have to recognize peace as a value but actively pursue it.

Gemara Berachot 64a

Babylonia

Rabbi Elazar said in the name of Rabbi Chanina: "Torah scholars increase peace in the world, as it is said: 'And all your children (banayich) shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children.' (Yeshaya 54:13) Do not read the word as banayich ('your children'), but rather as bonayich ('your builders'). *Those who love your Torah have great peace, and there is no stumbling block for them.*' (Tehilim 119:165). 'May there be peace within your walls, and serenity within your palaces.' (Tehilim 122:7). 'For the sake of my brethren and friends, I will now say, "Peace be within you." For the sake of the House of Hashem our God, I will seek your good.' (Tehilim 9-122:8). 'Hashem will give strength to His people; Hashem will bless His people with peace.'" (Tehilim 29:11)

גמרא ברכות סד.

n/a

אמר רבי אלעזר אמר רבי חנינא: תלמידי חכמים מרבים שלום בעולם, שנאמר: "וכל בניך למודי ה' ורב שלום בניך". אל תקרי "בניך" אלא "בוניך". "שלום רב לאהבי תורתך ואין למו מכשול". "יהי שלום בחילך שלוח בארמנותיך". "למען אחי ורעי אדברה נא שלום בך. למען בית ה' אלהינו אבקשה טוב לך". "ה' עז לעמו יתן ה' יברך את עמו בשלום."

From this Gemara that we say at the end of Mussaf, we see again that peace is so crucial to so many areas of our lives.

Questions for Reflection:

1. Are there any times when we would allow a different trait to override shalom?
2. How do Talmidei Chachamim increase peace in the world?

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