[Advent E2 Transcript]

[Shalom in Stones, Weights, and Hearts—and Also Fulfillment (00:00—15:15)]

Jon: Hey, Tim.

Tim: Hi, Jon.

Jon: Hello. We're working through the four words related to Advent.

Tim: Mhm. Yes.

Jon: Advent's a season of the Christian calendar where you're anticipating the birth of Jesus.

Tim: Yeah. It's a Christian calendar tradition that emerged in the early centuries of the Jesus movement. It was a way of structuring the arc of your year and your worship patterns, eating patterns, according to the story of Jesus.

Jon: It begins with these four weeks of—

Tim: Yeah. It begins with four weeks of Advent—oh, Ad—the word Advent means "arrival" or "coming."

Jon: Okay.

Tim: And it's a period of waiting. And so—

Jon: The story begins with waiting.

Tim: The story begins with waiting. Yeah. And it—the season of Advent, for the four weeks leading up to the birth of Jesus, it's about cultivating the virtue of learning how to wait. So week one is typically connected to hope, which is—we just talked about in the last episode—the generative tension of waiting.

Jon: Mmm. Yeah. That's a good summary.

Tim: And then the key second word, uh, is the word "peace."

Jon: Peace.

Tim: Peace. Mhm.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So we're gonna ponder the biblical topic of peace.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: So in the Hebrew Bible, the word translated as "peace" most consistently is the Hebrew word *shalom*.

Jon: Yeah, *shalom*.

Tim: It's probably the Hebrew word that most people who don't—

Jon: Know Hebrew?

Tim: Know Hebrew know.

Jon: Because it means "hello," right?

Tim: Oh! In contemporary Hebrew, it's what you say when you come up to a person and greet them.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Mhm. You say, "*Shalom*."

Jon: "*Shalom*." Because that's a modern Hebrew thing.

Tim: That's a modern Hebrew thing. Well, but we'll see. There's some ancient precedent for it. So that's a noun, *shalom*.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: It's related to a verb, at its root, which is *shalem*.

Jon: And what would that be in English? If peace is the noun, "making peace"?

Tim: Well, or "being at peace."

Jon: Being at peace.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: "To be peaced."

[Laughter]

Tim: "To be at peace."

Jon: Be at peace.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Yeah. It would be—there's *shalom*, and then there's the, the state of being *shalom*. And we're just gonna see some examples.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Deuteronomy chapter 27. This is Moses talking to Joshua and the Israelites. They're on the east side of the Jordan River. And Moses is gonna die, and he knows it. But the people are going to cross the river and go into the land. And he says, "When you cross the land, you're gonna come to this spot, and," Deuteronomy chapter 27 verse 5, "you shall build there," at that spot, "an altar to the Lord your God, an altar of stones; you shall not use an iron tool on them."

Jon: "Don't carve these stones."

Tim: Yeah, "Don't carve them. Don't get fancy. Don't make them into nice blocks." And in the background here is ancient, both Egyptian and Canaanite, like, altar styles. Which you would make these huge platforms. By huge, I mean, like, ten by fifteen feet square.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Big, carved, rectangle stones.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Actually, there's one in northern Israel. A massive platform, and they've recreated it. These are rectangle stones that are probably, like, four feet by two feet or something like that. These huge rectangle slabs.

Jon: Okay. And you gotta carve those so that they fit together.

Tim: Exactly.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Yeah. "Don't do that."

Jon: "Don't do that."

[Laughter]

Jon: Okay. Don't do that one.

Tim: Yeah. Rather, "You shall build the altar for Yahweh your God of *shalem* stones."

Jon: Hmm. Natural stones, but *shalem*.

Tim: *Shalem* stones.

Jon: “Undisturbed.”

Tim: Yeah, there you go. “Undisturbed.” “Whole.”

Jon: Ah. “Unedited.”

Tim: “Unedited.” Yeah. There’s something about fullness or natural, complete. You haven’t altered them. It’s the *shalem* stone.

Jon: Huh. [Tim laughs] Okay. Interesting.

Tim: Let’s hold that one. All right. A couple chapters earlier in Deuteronomy 25, Moses is talking to the leaders of Israel saying, “Hey, when you go in and, you know, you are living in the land, you’re gonna need to have marketplaces where people are buying and selling and trading stuff.” And they would have weights and measures. You know, like, “Hey, could I have,” like, whatever, “ten grams of some cassia oil or myrrh or something?”

Jon: Right. And you gotta weigh out ten grams.

Tim: Exactly right. So Deuteronomy 25:13, “Don’t have in your bag differing weights, one large, one small.”

Jon: In order to be deceptive. Like fraud.

Tim: Cheating people, that’s right. Yeah. Like, I have a little bag, and it says it has five grams of stones in it. And I’ll use that on the balance.

Jon: Right.

Tim: But actually it has, like, six grams or three or whatever. “Don’t have bags of differing weights. Don’t have in your house differing measures, large and small.” Once again, to, like, trick people.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: “You shall have a *shalem* and a just, or fair, weight; and you shall have a *shalem* and just measure. So that you can live long days in the land.”

Jon: Okay. So “just,” meaning?

Tim: Like, “fair.”

Jon: Fair.

Tim: In terms of, like, relational equity.

Jon: Okay. And then *shalem*.

Tim: Yeah. So you could have maybe, like, three stones in your bag and be like, “Yeah, it makes up five grams.” Or you could just have a *shalem* weight, which is just one. One block or one stone.

Jon: Oh, is that what it’s referring to?

Tim: *Shalem*.

Jon: A oneness to it.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: If you just have one stone that’s three grams, how are you gonna alter it?

Tim: Exactly. Yeah. So if you have a *shalem* weighing stone, it’s like one big, complete piece.

Jon: That’s what that means here, one complete piece?

Tim: Yeah. A *shalem* weight and a *shalem* measure.

Jon: Oh.

Tim: Yeah. [laughs]

Jon: Okay.

Tim: It’s such a rad image.

Jon: You’ve got the one weight.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: The weight corresponds to the thing that it fairly represents. And it’s just—You don’t alter it. It’s just the one thing.

Tim: Yeah. Yep. *Shalem*.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Okay. Here’s a little twist. This is a metaphorical usage of *shalem*. 2 Kings chapter 20. You got a king of Judah in Jerusalem named Hezekiah. He gets really sick. Like, he’s super sick. And so, “Isaiah, the son of Amoz, the prophet, came to him and said, ‘This is what Yahweh says, “Man, you better get your house in order because you’re gonna die. You’re not gonna recover.”’ And Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and he began praying to Yahweh, saying, ‘Yahweh, please remember how I went about before you in faithfulness and with a *shalem* heart.’”

Jon: And “heart,” we’re talking about the whole inner life of a person.

Tim: Yeah, yeah.

Jon: It's my inner life, who I am, the things I desire.

Tim: Yeah, purpose, desire, plan. All that. "With my heart, I've been *shalem*."

Jon: I mean, that's a—it's a really good image of just someone's inside, unaltered.

Tim: Mhm. My whole heart has been devoted to you—

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Is the idea underneath here.

Jon: I see.

Tim: A wholeness of heart, a completeness of heart.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Mhm. That matches a trustworthiness in how I live before you. Anyways, interesting use.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So we've got a *shalem* stone—

Jon: It's whole, unaltered.

Tim: Mhm. Yeah.

Jon: Complete.

Tim: We've got *shalem* and just weights and measures, which is a similar, kind of a physical description.

Jon: Mhm. But then it speaks to integrity. There's something interesting about—If you're not altering something, then it is what it is, you know?

Tim: That's right. Yes. That's the through line here.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Yeah, it's what it's supposed to be.

Jon: Right.

Tim: And—

Jon: Ah, it is what it's supposed to be.

Tim: It's what it's supposed to be.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: And that can be true of a rock. It can be true of a measuring stone. It can be true of a human heart. This is *shalem*.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: Okay. So that is for something to exist in a state of *shalom*, as these examples.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: However, you can use this word *shalem* in an active sense, like a, causing something to be in a state of *shalom*.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: And here's some examples of that. Solomon, the last line describing of how his making of the temple of Yahweh, this famous Solomon's Temple. First Kings chapter 9 verse 25. "He offered sacrifices three times a year, burnt offerings, fellowship offerings on the altar that he built for Yahweh. He offered incense with it, and so he—" and I'm just going to use the English phrase, "made *shalem* the house," that is, the temple.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: This is about the inaugural year of the temple.

Jon: Is—because there's three big offering periods?

Tim: This is the three pilgrimage feasts.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Yeah. Passover.

Jon: So Passover—

Tim: Pentecost and—

Jon: And then *Sukkot*?

Tim: Tabernacles. Yep.

Jon: Tabernacles. Okay, so did all three.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: And then he did all the other offerings too. And he did all the incense offerings. So he did all the offerings that were meant to happen in the temple.

Tim: Yeah, he completed all of—

Jon: He completed all of them.

Tim: The whole liturgy, annual liturgy. And so he *shillam*-ed the house.

Jon: Okay, “made complete.”

Tim: Mhm. Made it enter into a state of *shalom*. Adds to its purpose.

Jon: If you made something for a purpose, but the thing hasn’t done its purpose yet, and you run it through its paces, and you see like, “Yep. It can do it. It does do it. It’s now complete.”

Tim: Mhm. Okay, so King James has, “finished the house.” He finished the house. So does the New American Standard, “finished.” New Revised has “completed the house.” Ooh, NIV gets a little fancy. He “fulfilled the temple obligations.”

Jon: Fulfilled.

Tim: Mhm. Because I think what they’re noting is that this isn’t about, like, the actual physical material completion. That happened earlier in the story. This is the moment where he’s done now the full annual liturgy and all the rituals in the temple. And this is described as him making *shalem* the house by doing all the things that the house was designed to be for.

Jon: Hmm. Yeah, using the thing for its purpose to make *shalem*.

Tim: Yeah. There’s two examples in Isaiah chapter 44 where God says that he’s announced a plan through his messengers, which I think refers to, like, the prophets, the biblical prophets. And God’s talking about how he keeps his promises. He does what he says he’s gonna do through the prophets. And so you have this phrase, “God is the one who keeps the word of his servant and who—” and here’s our word—“*shalem*-s the plan of his messengers.”

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: So God has servants and messengers that he speaks through, like, “I’m gonna do this.” And then when God brings about in history the things that the prophet said, it’s God keeping his word and *shalem*-ing the plan.

Jon: Hmm. [Tim laughs] Yeah. Completing.

Tim: Yeah, complete.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So there’s some plan, and it sets out a thing, but yet it’s yet to be realized. It’s yet to be fulfilled.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: And so *shalem* is the realization of the thing you were pointing at.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: Oh, here's a great example. This is in a case law from the laws in the book of Exodus. Let's say you and I are, like, farmers, and we have, like, two fields that are next to each other.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: And let's say I'm, uh, doing a controlled burn [Jon laughs] over one of my sections of my field. And let's say some embers float up over onto your field. And, this is what it says. "If a fire breaks out and spreads to some thorn bushes or some stacked grain or standing grain and the field is consumed, the one who started that fire will surely *shalem*."

Jon: Okay. And you would think—what's the word we would use here?

Tim: "Repay"?

Jon: Repay.

Tim: Provide compensation.

Jon: Yeah, "compensate."

Tim: Or if you came after me looking for compensation, isn't that where we would use our word "recompense"? Get recompense.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: So the ideal state is for you and I to be cool with each other as neighboring farmers.

Jon: But you just burned my field.

Tim: I know. [both laugh] That's right. So what's interesting is just the mere fact of you and I existing in a state of relational inequality where I did something, and now I owe you to make it right.

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: Just existing in that state is no *shalom*.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: The opposite of *shalom*. Cause we're not fighting yet. It's just that I owe you and I haven't *shalem*-ed you yet.

Jon: Our relationship isn't whole.

Tim: Yes. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jon: There isn't a completion to our relationship. It's fragmented.

Tim: Exactly.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: So you can have a physical object that can be, you know, in a state of being whole or complete. And now here it is with relational fullness as the ideal. So these are our uses of *shalom* as a verb. Isn't that interesting?

Jon: Yeah. The wholeness and the completeness and the authenticity of what the thing is or should be.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: That's the focus of the word.

Tim: There's some sense of an ideal. There's, like, what a thing is for. And when it's in that state, that's the *shalom* state.

Jon: That's *shalom*.

Tim: And if it is not existing in that state, then you need to do some *shalem*-ing to, like, make it be in that state. Make the relationship right. Make the house, the temple, finally work for the purpose it was purposed to work.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: So you get the idea. You have two states of being. You could say partial, unfulfilled, unfair, unequal. And then you have the opposite state—whole, complete, fulfilled, equal. Now you've got *shalem*.

[Musical Break (14:50—15:15)]

[Shalom as Well-Being and the Prince of Shalom (15:15—29:20)]

Tim: So all the way back, *shalom* is how you say "hello" in modern Hebrew.

Jon: Yeah.

[Laughter]

Tim: “*Shalom*.”

Jon: “*Shalom*.”

Tim: It’s different than hello, which is just like, “Hi, I’m acknowledging you.”

Jon: [laughing] It’s just straight-up acknowledgement. [Tim laughs] You exist. And I exist. That’s all hello is.

Tim: It’s different to say *shalom* to somebody.

Jon: *Shalom* is, “What is this day for? And I hope that’s what’s happening for you.”

Tim: Mmm. “What do you exist for, my friend?”

Jon: Mmm.

Tim: “I wish wholeness and completeness upon you.”

Jon: “*Shalom*.”

Tim: “*Shalom*.” Yes.

Jon: That’s cool.

Tim: Yes. So that’s modern Hebrew. It seems to derive from an ancient Hebrew turn of phrase. And I’ll just show you some examples. So in book of Genesis, Jacob gives his, you know, Joseph the special coat. He has some dreams about ruling the world and his family.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: And then his brothers hate him.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Well, sometime after all that blows over, kind of, Jacob says to Joseph, “Hey, you know, your brothers have been out for a while taking the flock, like, on this kind of seasonal migration pattern. I haven’t seen them for a while.” So he says, Genesis 37 verse 13, “Hey, aren’t your brothers pasturing the flock now in *Shechem*, near this town? Um, look, I’m gonna send you to them.” And Joseph said, “Cool, I’ll go.” Then he said to him, “Yeah, so go see about the *shalom* of your brothers and about the *shalom* of the flock, and then bring word back to me.” And so he sent him out.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: “See about the *shalom* of your brothers and of the flock.” It’s a great turn of phrase.

Jon: Yeah. So what he is interested in is: “Are they safe?”

Tim: Right. “Is the flock getting enough? Are they grazing enough each day?”

Jon: “Has everyone got enough food? Is there any quarrels with any neighboring shepherds?”

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: “Is there any wolves around? Lions giving them trouble?”

Tim: Yeah. So one layer would be about, you know: “Are they free from danger?” “Are they free from conflict?” But it’s more than that.

Jon: More than that. Hmm. There’s a purpose for this migratory loop that they’re going on. “Feed the flock, come back healthy. Is that happening?”

Tim: Yeah, that’s right. This is very similar to a moment in the book of Exodus where, after Moses has led the Israelites, boy, out of Egypt, through that crazy night at the sea, months through the desert eating manna and drinking from springs—that was a pretty intense season. And they make it to Mount Sinai, and who meets him there? His father-in-law, Jethro. Exodus chapter 18 verse 6, “Jethro sent word to Moses saying, ‘It’s me, your father-in-law Jethro. Hey, I’m gonna come to you and I’ve got, you know, your wife and your two sons here.’ So Moses went out to meet his father-in-law. He bowed down, kissed him, and they asked each other about their *shalom*. And then they went into the tent,” to hang out and have a meal.

Jon: Hmm. They asked about their *shalom*.

Tim: They asked each other about your *shalom*. Like, “Hey man, how’s your *shalom*?”

Jon: Oh wow.

Tim: [laughs] Isn’t that great?

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: How’s your *shalom* today?

Jon: How would we translate that?

Tim: “How you’re doing?”

[Laughter]

Jon: Yeah, but it’s more than “How are you doing?” “How’s your *shalom*?”

Tim: Mhm. “Are you fulfilling your life purpose?”

[Laughter]

Jon: “Tell me about your vocational goals.”

Tim: Yeah, or I like just the figure of speech, I—ask about your *shalom*.

Jon: Yeah, “How’s your *shalom* doing?”

Tim: By using the word *shalom*, you’re putting the ideal goal as, like, the measure. And you’re saying like, “Hey man, you were made for *shalom*. How’s your *shalom* today?”

Jon: That’s so fascinating.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: It’s asking someone, like, “Are you flourishing? Are you attaining the thing that you know you’re meant for?” “How’s your *shalom* doing?”

Tim: [laughing] “How’s your *shalom*?”

[Laughter]

Tim: I don’t know why I’m laughing.

Jon: No, it’s cool. It’s a really cool way to greet someone.

Tim: So let’s try and summarize. *Shalom* in biblical thought isn’t just the absence of some negative state of affairs, like conflict.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Or being in danger. It is that, but it’s also the positive presence of all of these great conditions.

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: Fulfilling your purpose. You have plenty. Your relationships are complete and whole. There’s nothing broken, no unresolved tensions.

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: So the presence of the positive is just as important as the absence of the negative.

Jon: Right. Or almost even more important. It’s the focus.

Tim: Yeah. Yeah, that’s right.

Jon: The focus is on “What is the purpose? What is the meaning of this? Are we attaining that?”

Tim: Right.

Jon: Not, “Are the frustrating things out of the way?” That’s not the focus.

Tim: Yes. Okay. So actually, here’s a great example. Leviticus 26 verse 3. “If you all walk in my statutes and keep my commands and do them, I’m going to give you rain in its time.” So this is also a group of farmers. So we’re describing an ideal set of conditions for—

Jon: This isn’t someone looking to do a soccer tournament.

Tim: No. So “I’ll give you rain in its time. The land will give its produce. The trees of the field will give their fruit. The threshing season will overtake the grape harvest, and the grape harvest will overtake the time for sowing seed.” So normally, these things that are separate in your calendar, the ground’s producing so much—

Jon: Going to overflow on each other.

Tim: Yeah, that’s like, there’s so much to harvest that you’re still harvesting in the previous crop when you’re starting to plant the next one. “You will eat your food to the fill. You will live securely in the land. I’ll give you *shalom*.” So right there, you’re just like, “Wow.”

Jon: That’s *shalom*.

Tim: That’s *shalom*. But then, flip it over. “You shall lie down and there’ll be no one who makes you afraid. I’ll remove harmful animals from the land. No sword,” that is, no invading armies, “will pass through your land. I will turn to you and make you fruitful and numerous and keep my covenant with you.” So this is a great example where the word *shalom* is at the center of this paragraph.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: And you go from the presence of all these positive conditions, a short description of the absence of the negative, and then you go back to the positive. And *shalom* is the thing in the center.

Jon: Yeah. “What does it look like for life to be full and complete? And that’s what I want to give you.”

Tim: That’s *shalom*. Yes. Okay. So there’s one prophet among the Hebrew prophets that *shalom* vocabulary is just off the charts, and that’s the prophet Isaiah. The scroll of the prophet Isaiah is just packed with *shalom* vocabulary. And in fact, one of the most—speaking of Advent—one of the most famous, kind of Advent Scripture readings, it gets read in churches and, whatever, Christmas plays—

Jon: Yeah.

[Laughter]

Tim: Is the hope for a new king from the line of David who will fulfill all of the failures of the line of David up to that point. Isaiah chapter 9 verses 6 through 7. Such a cool passage. And it's a celebration song. And it reads, "For a child has been born for us, and a son has been given to us. Dominion will be on his shoulder." That's a cool image.

Jon: He will bear the weight of rule?

Tim: Yeah. Yeah, that's it.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: It's a heavy burden.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Being in charge of a bunch of people and their living situation, and—it's heavy. It's complicated. So "dominion will be on his shoulder, and his name will be called—" and then he's—he has four names. There's a whole rabbit hole here of, like, the ancient practice of naming kings and giving them lots of different symbolic names. These are throne names.

Jon: Throne names.

Tim: I haven't looked this up in a while. My memory from it is that our oldest evidence from it is in Egyptian enthronement ritual texts.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Where the new king would just be given all of these, all these names.

Jon: Hmm. Cool.

Tim: So it's probably not, like, what people called him, you know, walking up in the street or in the court. But it's saying, "This is who you are, what you're made for, what you're destined for as king." So "his name will be called Counselor of Wonders." Or it often gets translated as "Wonderful Counselor," but "counselor" not in terms of, like, a therapist, but like a planner, strategist.

Jon: Okay. "A strategist of wonders."

Tim: "A strategist whose plans accomplish things that will blow your mind." "A counselor of wonders."

Jon: He's the architect of really amazing plans.

Tim: Yeah. Yeah, he makes plans, and you've never seen anything like it when they come to pass. That's his first name. Isn't that a rad name?

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: "Counselor of wonders."

[Jon laughs]

Tim: *El Gibbor*, "God the mighty warrior." Like, whoa.

Jon: Yeah, it's a tough name.

Tim: Wha— [laughs]

Jon: That's his, uh, WWE name.

Tim: Yeah. [both laugh] Yeah. This is, uh, what the Israelites call God in their song of praise after he rescued them in the night through the sea, defeating Pharaoh in the waters.

Jon: God defeats the snake, defeats the sea dragon—he's *El Gibbor*.

Tim: Yeah. This is the ring—the ring champion, the fighter.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Okay. So the king is being called *El Gibbor*, "God the warrior," meaning that what this king does for us is God, you know, protecting and fighting us. He is also called "Father of Perpetual Ongoingness"

[Laughter]

Tim: Or translated typically, "Everlasting Father."

Jon: *Avi ad*.

Tim: Mhm. And this is interesting, but he was also just called a "son."

Jon: Okay.

Tim: When we encounter this son, we encounter the "Father of Ongoingness," never-stopping-ness. Perpetually existing father. Yeah, yeah. Such a rad image. That's the third name. And then, uh, the fourth one is—why I'm bringing this up in the first place is—*Sar Shalom*. The "Ruler of *Shalom*," or the Prince of Peace [Jon laughs] is what King James went for.

Jon: Oh yeah. Prince of Peace.

Tim: It has the nice alliteration, the double P. But *sar* just means “ruler.” It can be used of kings, but can also be used of, like, the group of leaders that rules right underneath a king.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: But a ruler of *shalom*.

Jon: A ruler of *shalom*. Yeah.

Tim: So what’s great is it could be referring to his own personal qualities.

Jon: That he has *shalom*? He rules with *shalom*?

Tim: Like King Hezekiah. “I’ve had a *shalem* heart.” So it could be he himself is, like, exists in a *shalom* state. But if he’s a ruler, then you also hope that he’s, like, sharing the *shalom*.

Jon: Yeah, the dominion’s on his shoulders. His purpose is to bear the weight of ruling in such a way that things are good.

Tim: That things are good. Which, it goes on. Verse 7, “His dominion”—it’s the same word as “dominion on his shoulder”—“His dominion will grow continually. And there will be *shalom* with no end.”

Jon: Yeah, completeness with no end. Hmm. You went to this ruler, and you said, “How’s your *shalom*?”

Tim: Mmm. Mmm.

Jon: He’d be like, “Hmm, there’s no end.”

[Laughter]

Tim: Oh, okay. So it could be—when you say the *shalom*, there’s no end, the first thing that I think of is saying, “It will never stop.” There’ll be nothing that will ever compromise it. Meaning no danger, but also no lack.

Jon: Yeah. Yeah.

Tim: No inequity. It’s just pure *shalom* all the time. 24/7 *shalom*.

Jon: 24/7 *shalom*.

Tim: That’s the meme.

[Laughter]

Jon: So if you just say, yeah, “How are you doing?” “I’m good.” “How’s your *shalom*?” “There’s no end.”

[Laughter]

Tim: That’s great.

Jon: Yeah. My *shalom*’s rocking.

Tim: Yeah. So what’s cool is, in this passage, notice how eternity language is also brought—or like, unending.

Jon: Everlasting Father.

Tim: Father of ongoingness. His dominion will grow, just, more and more. And there’s no cutoff point to the *shalom* that he brings about.

Jon: Yeah. Wow.

Tim: So that’s a cool emphasis. But then also, the ambiguity of this phrase, “ruler of *shalom*,” could mean, like, he—he himself is in a state of *shalom*. But the whole point of a ruler is that he brings it about for others, which is what the second use of *shalom* in the passage is. So he himself is *shalom*, and then he brings about *shalom* for others. “He’ll sit on the throne of David over his kingdom, establish and sustain it with justice and righteousness.” Ooh, “now and forever” he brings about right relationships. It’s a rad little picture here.

Jon: “The zeal of Yahweh of hosts will do this.”

Tim: Yeah, Yahweh’s passionate to make this happen.

Jon: Oh, okay. This is really on the heart of God to make this happen.

Tim: Mmm. There’s a short list of things in the Bible that God’s really passionate about. And bringing about this state of affairs is one of them.

Jon: That’s cool.

Tim: Yeah. This is *shalom*.

Jon: The Ruler of *Shalom*.

Tim: Yeah. Prince of Peace. It has a ring to it. I think that was a good move.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Ruler of *Shalom*.

[Musical Break (28:52—29:20)]

[Jesus, Our Peace (29:20—35:33)]

Tim: There's a couple places in the New Testament where Jesus or one of the apostles picks up this close connection between Jesus and peace. And one of them's in Ephesians, chapter 2, which is a dense, complex passage. So I'm approaching it with fear and trembling because there's many rabbit holes that we could fall into. I just want to draw attention to one thing. That in Ephesians 2:14, Paul's talking about how non-Israelites and Israelites have been brought together on equal standing, equal status together in the family of God. And even though those are two groups that typically have been at odds with each other throughout biblical history and in Paul's time, he said Messiah brought them together. And then Ephesians 2:14, he has this rad little line where he says, "He himself is our peace."

Jon: Jesus.

Tim: Jesus. Messiah himself—

Jon: Is our peace.

Tim: Is our—and the "our" is Israelite and non-Israelite in the context of the passage. He is our peace.

Jon: He's our peace.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: Prince of Peace.

Tim: Yeah. And then it goes on to say he is our peace because he was an Israelite who allowed himself to be killed by Israelites and non-Israelites. He's thinking about the role of the Roman officials and the role of the—Israel's priests in executing Jesus. And he says, "by allowing them to exhaust—"

Jon: Oh, yeah.

Tim: "Their own tension and rivalry." Because, you know, it was an uneasy peace that the Sadducees and chief priests were brokering with Pilate and Rome, and it erupted into conflict many times. And so Jesus put himself as an Israelite in between a bunch of Israelites and the Roman officials. He allowed their plans to kill him. And what he says is he, in verse 15, "He exhausted the enmity between them."

Jon: "Enmity," meaning?

Tim: Hostility.

Jon: Hostility.

Tim: Yeah. “So that—” and he assumes here, whole backstory, that in his death and resurrection from the dead, that he within himself “might create the two into one new human, thus making peace,” he says.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: So it’s this dual nature of he is our peace because he himself is the one standing in the middle of these two warring parties. And then he did something that then accomplished peace for others.

Jon: So the purpose of humanity is to be one.

Tim: Yeah. To exist in right relationships with each other.

Jon: No matter what your ethnic or national heritage or your tribal allegiance, any of this stuff. There’s this kind of oneness to humanity. Like, within our differences, we’re also then united. And that’s *shalom*. That’s a completeness. And Jesus is that for us? And he’s making that happen?

Tim: Oh yeah. So it’s interesting, is, “king” in Isaiah 9, he is just a strategic planner and he’s a great fighter, right? The mighty warrior God. He is *shalom*, and he brings about *shalom*. But you kind of think of a king, like, ruling and making decisions and getting forceful when he needs to. In Ephesians, the way that Jesus brings peace is to say, “Hey, here’s you group of people and you group of people. I belong to one of your groups.”

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: “And you’re constantly fighting, trying to kill each other. So I’ll put myself in the middle, and you guys kill me.”

Jon: “Exhaust yourself on me.”

Tim: “Kill me instead of each other. Because I can do this thing where I can overcome death. And then I’ll stand there in between you, having faced the exhaustion of your violence.”

Jon: “And then I’ll ask you, ‘How’s your *shalom*?’”

Tim: “And then I’ll ask you, like, yeah, ‘How’s your *shalom*? Come sit at my table and let’s eat together.’” And that’s the idea of—it’s what Paul goes on to say, “He reconciled both groups together.” So he accomplishes peace, not through forceful coercion—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: But actually letting them exhaust their violence on him. And then inviting them to sit at the same table again after he's overcome their violence. It's very, surprise twist in the story.

Jon: Yeah, that's what it means, "exhausting the enmity in his flesh"?

Tim: Mhm. Yeah. So in his body, in his actual physical flesh body hanging on the cross, it's like he's taking the violent hostility of both Israelite and the Roman powers. It's a very bold interpretation of the execution of a Jewish prophet-peacemaker from the line of David, you know? There were thousands of Jews who were crucified in the reign of Pilate.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: But this one, Paul says, was divine peace become human to invite these two groups into each other. Peace. Notice also, I guess, the presence. It's both the absence of violence, like, "I'm gonna help you stop killing each other—"

Jon: Yeah. But the point is to become one.

Tim: To become one. Yeah.

Jon: That's the *shalom*. The oneness.

Tim: Yeah, totally.

Jon: Yeah. That's the good news of peace.

Tim: Yeah, the good news of peace. Yeah. So there you go. There you go. We just took our tour through the concept of *shalom* as being a state of fullness, completeness—metaphorically, literally. It's the presence of all these positive things that are a part of fulfilling someone's purpose, but also the absence of negative things. And then, the way Isaiah thinks of a king being *shalom* and bringing *shalom*, the Jesus story picks up that, but then with a surprise twist of how Jesus is peace and accomplishes peace through his death and resurrection.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: There you go. It's like the biblical story in a nutshell using just the word "peace" as the outline.