

ENCORE | John 20: The Resurrection of Jesus Christ—Our Peace

- 1) Mary was filled with sorrow:
 - a) Is it wrong to grieve? Why or why not?
 - b) Can grief become sinful? Please explain.
- 2) What is the source of fear or worry?
- 3) What is the essence of doubt?
- 4) Can the truth of the gospel really allay all fears, sorrows and doubts? How?
- 5) What did the Apostle Paul mean in 2 Corinthians 6:10 when he said, “as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing?”
- 6) Why did Jesus speak “peace” the three times when He appeared to the disciples (v. 19, 21, 26)?
- 7) Jesus sent Mary back to the disciples with a message (v. 17). Does His message encourage you? How?
- 8) Evidently John believed when he saw the empty tomb. It is just as evident that Mary had not yet believed (by her sorrowful response). Why did Jesus appear to her first?
- 9) What does it mean to “live in light of the gospel”?

Some verses that talk about Jesus being or bringing peace: Isaiah 53:5; “But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.” Eph. 2:14; “For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation.” Jn. 14:27; “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.” Jn. 16:33; “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” Acts 10:36; “The word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ—He is Lord of all...” Rom. 5:1; “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...” Rom. 8:6: “For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” Rom. 10:15; “And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!’” Rom. 14:17; “For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” Rom. 14:19; “Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another.” Rom. 15:13; “Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” Rom. 15:33; “Now the God of peace be with you all.” Rom. 16:20; “And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.” 1 Cor. 14:33; “For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.” Gal. 5:22; “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness...” Eph. 2:17; “And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near.” Eph. 4:3; “...Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” Eph. 6:15; “...And having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace...” Phil. 4:7; “...And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Phil. 4:9; “The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.” Col. 1:20; “...And by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.” Col. 3:15; “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.” 2 Thes. 3:16; “Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way. The Lord be with you all.” Heb. 13:20; “Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant...” Js. 3:18; “Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.”

Looking Ahead | Judges 8:22-9:56: Abimelech the Bramble King

Monday (v. 8:22-23) – The Israelites had a desire for a king to rule over them. The Lord was to be their King but still they wanted a human monarch. Their desire for a king was linked to their desire to be like the nations around them. This desire was a continual stumbling block for the Children of Israel. Verse 23 tells Gideon's heart at this time; "I will not rule over you...the Lord shall rule over you." Another reason the people desired a human king was because they had spiritual problems; they wanted a king they could see. It was not easy for them to relate to God as their King because He is a Spirit and He is God, they wanted a king that they could relate to and talk to.... isn't it interesting; that is exactly what God is to His people!

- Daily Bible Reading: Josh. 22-24; Lk. 12:1-31

Tuesday (v. 8:24-35) – Gideon asks a favor or "request" of the people; the weight of the gold listed would be around 1130 oz. and at today's prices would be worth around \$1,040,730. A million dollar favor! All of that is besides the plunder from the kings of Midian. Adam Clarke comments: "This computation of the weight of the golden ear-rings, taken from the slaughtered Ishmaelites, will bring to the reader's mind the slaughter of the Roman knights by the Carthaginians at the battle of Cannae, from whose spoils Hannibal sent three bushels of gold rings to the city of Carthage!" Consider this; Gideon refused to be their king but he did, in a way, act as a king by taking a large share of the plunder. He then used this gold to put up some kind of "ephod" which was "a snare" obviously a reference to pagan worship of the ephod. He then sinned by taking many wives for himself. As a result of this (and other factors) at the end of his life the people forgot all the good Gideon had done for Israel.

- Daily Bible Reading: Jud. 1-3; Lk. 12:32-59

Wednesday (v. 9:1-6) – Judges 8:31 tells us that Gideon fathered Abimelech by a concubine. A concubine was basically a female servant who was like a wife yet less than a wife. Abimelech was part of the family yet he probably did not receive the same treatment that Gideon's other sons received. Judges 9 tells us much about the character of Abimelech and in verses 1-6 we see the beginnings of his wicked plan to assume a position of political power in Israel. Notice he first went to his mother's side of the family; why do you think that is? How would you describe his appeal to them in verse 2? How did the people of Shechem respond (v.3)? Now this is where the account turns dark; Abimelech hired worthless and reckless men with the money from Shechem and then went and killed 70 of his brothers (all but one) in ritualistic fashion. How did the men of Shechem respond to this atrocity (v.6)?

- Daily Bible Reading: Jud. 4-6; Lk. 13:1-22

Thursday (v. 9:7-15) – This is the account of Jotham's pronouncement against his half-brother Abimelech and the people of Shechem. You may have noticed that it is written in poetic form. What is the significance of this section of Scripture being presented as a poem or song? Verse 8 tells us what is going on in this account; the choosing of a king. Now notice how Jotham presents his case; the olive – gives oil, the fig – gives fruit, the grape – provides juice but what about the bramble? The bramble is a thorn bush which is good for nothing – maybe less than nothing. Brambles were also notorious for being dry (like a tumble weed) and catching on fire. It is interesting to note that Jotham's words in verse 15 are actually prophetic...

- Daily Bible Reading: Jud. 7-8; Lk. 13:23-25

Friday (v. 9:16-21) – "if you have acted in truth and sincerity" Jotham knew that the people of Shechem and Beth Millo had not acted in truth or according to God's will. What do you think motivated them to make Abimelech their king? What generally motivates people to choose a certain person to lead or rule over them? Notice that Jotham again pronounces his judgment of fire against Abimelech, Shechem & Beth Millo.

- Daily Bible Reading: Josh. 22-24; Lk. 12:1-31

Saturday (9:22-57) – Abimelech's reign was a relatively short one – three years. Verse 23 says that God sent a spirit of ill will between Abimelech and the men of Shechem. Notice that this was God's judgment on Abimelech and the people of Shechem. This is a great reminder to us that God will not be mocked; you cannot throw sin up in God's face and expect Him not to deal with it. Notice how the men of Shechem rebelled; they decided to set up an ambush and to rob travelers in the area; nice guys. Instead of dealing with or confronting Abimelech they just turned to highway robbery which would cause problems for Abimelech. One thing I definitely get from this passage is that Abimelech was not the kind of guy you mess with. Verses 46-49 detail the account of how the bramble burned up the people of Shechem (just as Jotham had said he would). God also dealt with Abimelech and the other involved in this terrible account. Verses 56-57 are a sobering reminder of the consequences of willfully rejecting the will and word of God.

- Daily Bible Reading: Jud. 9-10; Lk. 14:1-24

Sunday –

- Daily Bible Reading: Jud. 11-12; Lk. 14:25-35