

**MORASHAH**  
**THE RABBINIC FELLOWSHIP OF THE UTJ**  
 811 Palisade Ave., Teaneck, NJ 07666  
[www.utj.org](http://www.utj.org) 201.801.0707

Rabbi Pinchas Klein

*Parashat HaShavuah Series*

This week, we read in the Torah:

The Lord said to Moses, "Tell Aaron and his sons, 'this is how you are to bless Israel.

Say to them:

The Lord bless you and keep you;

The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you;

The Lord turn his face toward you and give you *Shalom*."

Shalom!

We all know the word *shalom*, but what does it mean? It means many things. It means "peace." It means "hello." It means "goodbye." It is also one of the many Hebrew names for God.

"Shalom" is the ultimate word in Judaism, and *shalom* is always "the last word" – our prayers end with a desire for peace.

Three times daily, the *amida* prayer ends with *Sim Shalom*, a prayer for peace.

The last words of the *kaddish* prayer are: "*Oseh Shalom...*" May He who makes peace in the heavens above make a peace for us and for all Israel."

The last sentence in *Birkat Hamazon*, the grace after meals, reads: "God will give strength to His people; God will bless His people with peace."

The last teaching of the *Mishna* is: Great is peace because God did not find any vessel that can contain more blessing than peace.

Peace is the hope of humankind. It is the only blessing of God that must be shared. There are many blessings from God but only one blessing from God must be shared by all. You can have health while others are ill. You can have wealth while others are poor. You can have fame while others are unknown and forgotten. It is very difficult for any of us to have the blessing of peace by ourselves, while everyone else is in turmoil and conflict. Peace can never be private property; peace always has to be shared.

The *Maharal*, Rabbi Judah Lowe, a great Jewish mystical philosopher, explained that the difference between peace and all other blessings is that "all the blessings of the world are like gifts from God, but peace is of God himself."

May you be blessed with all the beautiful blessings of our holy Torah.

*Shabbat Shalom!*

---

*Rabbi Klein is the spiritual leader of Congregations at Shaare Shamayim, Philadelphia, PA.*

**The Union for Traditional Judaism is a trans-denominational organization dedicated to bringing the message of open-minded Halakhic Judaism to the widest possible audience.**

**All *Divrei Torah* can be found at <http://www.utj.org/Torah/HaShavuah>**