"2. Peace. The Hebrew word-family s¥lm (115 times in Pentateuch), is the basis for expressing notions of peace, though issues concerning peace occur without s¥lm vocabulary. The English word "peace" often connotes inner calm and tranquility, as well as the absence of strife or hostility. However, the Hebrew notion is much richer, though there has been much debate about the precise meaning of s¥lm. Von Rad (TDNT) argued that s¥lm has to do with material well-being, not inner peace, and was social, not individual. In contrast, it is commonly argued that the root meaning of s¥lm is "wholeness, completeness, health" (e.g., Westermann). So s¥lm describes a state, not a relationship, and thus notions of peace are an aberration. The more linguistically correct approach to determine meaning is not to find a basic and universal meaning, which can be a lowest common denominator, but to let context determine meaning in each case. So J. I. Durham finds that s¥lm can be material and relational, secular and theological. Similarly, G. Gerleman notes that the idea of restitution or recompense is frequent and significant in the establishment of peaceful relations or in the notion of a covenant of peace (e.g., Num 25:5–13). 2.1. Peace and Restitution. All but one occurrence of the verb in the Pentateuch are in the piel, which invariably denotes the idea of repayment, retribution. A wide variety of situations are envisaged (e.g., several times in Ex 21:34–22:14; Lev 5:16; 6:5; 24:18, 21; see also Gen 44:4; Deut 32:41). This indicates that an essential ingredient for peace is the payment of recompense for wrongs with the two parties being reconciled. The only other occurrence of the verb in the Pentateuch is the hiphil in Deuteronomy 20:12, in a section of laws for warfare, with the meaning "to cause peace" or "to reach an agreement" (see further below). Probably from the same word family is s¥e∑laœemˆîm, "fellowship offerings" (NIV) or "offerings of well-being" (NRSV). Though the precise significance of these *sacrifices is disputed, notions of atonement, retribution and reconciliation are involved (see, e.g., Ex 20:24; 24:5; 29:28; Lev 6:5–7; Deut 27:7). 2.2. Peace as Well-being. The noun s¥aœelo®m often denotes material well-being, sufficiency, prosperity or the inner sense of satisfaction. Often there is no theological content to this conception. So in Genesis 29:6 Jacob asks if things are "well" with his uncle Laban. Similarly, *Joseph asks about his brothers and father in Genesis 43:27–28 and receives the reply that his father is "well" (NRSV; see also Gen 37:14; Ex 18:7). Gerleman suggests that such questions are "weakened to a formula of greeting," though the context of the verses mentioned suggests much more is involved (Durham). The inquiries express a genuine concern for someone else regarding their health, wealth and general standard of life. Abram is promised that he will go to his ancestors in peace when he dies (Gen 15:15). Though the parallelism of this verse explains this as dying at a good old age, long life per se does not guarantee peace in death. Behind this statement lies a contrast with both the unnamed Egypt, who will face God's judgment, and with Abram's descendants, who will be oppressed aliens (Gen 15:13–14). Therefore for Abram to die in peace means neither to be under judgment nor to have lived under oppression. 2.3. Peace as Friendly Relations. SÁaœelo®m also describes friendly relations between people (cf. Gen 37:4). The link between peace and retribution seen above is hinted at in Exodus 18:23, where the people can return home in peace only when justice has been done. Similarly, the dismissal "Go in peace" in Genesis 44:17 applies only to those brothers of Joseph in whose sacks the cup was not found. They are innocent and hence can continue in peace. The guilty one cannot. Sometimes such friendly relationships are based on a treaty or agreement. So *Abimelech and *Isaac exchange oaths and make peace (Gen 26:29–31). The notion of restitution is not far away here. The expression "covenant of peace," be∑rˆît s¥aœelo®m, occurs in Numbers 25:12, where a covenant of peace is made by Yahweh with Phinehas, who has made restitution for sin and turned back Yahweh's wrath. So relations between God and Israel are restored because restitution has been paid. In some instances s¥lm may of itself convey treaty terminology. For example, the Shechemites believed they were at peace with Jacob's family (Gen 34:21). The expression may connote an alliance.

Similarly in Deuteronomy 23:6, Israel is warned never to promote the welfare (s¥aœlo®m) of the Ammonites or Moabites. Again, treaty terminology may be in the background of this prohibition (McCarthy; cf. Wiseman). Peace stands in contrast to war. So a treaty of peace or a friendly alliance precludes war between the two parties. Nonetheless, peace at any price is not God's aim, and the absence of war does not necessarily mean the existence of peace. In the course of its wilderness wanderings, Israel was instructed not to go to war against Edom, Moab and Ammon (Num 20:14–21:20; Deut 2:1–23). Yet it was to destroy Sihon (who rejected the terms of peace offered by Israel [Deut 2:26]) and Og, as well as all the inhabitants of the Promised Land (Num 21:21–35; Deut 2:24–3:11; 7:1–6). Also, Israel was instructed to offer terms of peace (Deut 20:12: hiphil s¥lm) to nations far off which, if refused, would be subjected to war. But for nations near, no such terms of peace were to be offered (Deut 20:10–18; see Nations of Canaan). 2.4. The Giver of Peace. Yahweh is the giver of peace. In this respect the Aaronic blessing of Numbers 6:24–26 is most important in the Pentateuch. This prayer shows that peace from God is linked with blessing, preservation or protection, and grace. Peace is enjoyed in Yahweh's presence (Durham). Similarly, in Genesis 28:19–22 Jacob's prayer for "peace" is based on his experience of God's presence. The Bible goes on to show that ultimately God's provision for restitution for sin makes such peace possible. In summary, peace is more than the somewhat bland definition of "wholeness" or "totality." It is more than absence of warfare and hostility. It is a state of positive friendship and security between two parties, often the result of restitution and reconciliation. The Aaronic blessing directs us to the source of peace and the key relationship in which it is to be enjoyed. The Mosaic laws show that a necessary corollary of peace with God is peace between his people. Leviticus 26:6 promises peace to those obedient to Yahweh. Disobedience destroys the prospects of peace both with God and with each other. Though in Deuteronomy 3:20 and elsewhere Yahweh promises rest "from all your enemies," the state of peace which that implies is tied up with faithful obedient living in God's land in a covenant relationship with Yahweh and with restitution for sin made under the terms, of that covenant. To some extent, then, peace and rest are overlapping terms, though it is too simple to say that "rest" is the deuteronomic equivalent of "peace" (von Rad TDNT, 404). P. A. Barker" Barker, P. A. Alexander, T. Desmond and David W. Baker, eds. DOTP. Accordance electronic edition, version 1.2. Grand Rapids: InterVarsity Press, 2003.