

# Sha'ul of Tarsus & His Letters ~ Part 62

## 1 Corinthians ~ Part 2

**Note: To examine the graphics in this series, click on them for a pop-up version.**

As I mentioned in my last post, we continue to explore **Sha'ul's Letters to the Corinthians**.

### Thanksgiving for Grace

Before dispensing advice that could antagonize some of his readers, **Sha'ul** expresses his underlying confidence in the **Corinthians**, establishing a basis of trust.

***<sup>4</sup> I thank my God always for you because of God's love and kindness given to you through the Messiah Yeshua,***

Statements of thanksgiving are a common feature in ancient letters. **Sha'ul** thanks **God** for the **Corinthian Believers** despite their immorality. He is thankful that they've come to Yeshua and are at least staying engaged with the **Messianic** community; this allows **God** to work in them and through them.

***<sup>5</sup> in that you have been enriched by Him in so many ways, particularly in power of speech and depth of knowledge. <sup>6</sup> Indeed, the testimony about the Messiah has become firmly established in you; <sup>7</sup> so that you are not lacking any spiritual gift and are eagerly awaiting the revealing of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah. <sup>8</sup> He will enable you to hold out until the end and thus be blameless on the Day of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah –***

**Sha'ul** clarified this grace concerning the gifts given to the **Corinthians**. Their spiritual giftedness confirmed their reception of the **testimony** of the gospel. **Sha'ul** declared they ***have been enriched***, referring to gifts that testified to their faith and those being abused or counterfeited within the congregation. These latter included such gifts as ecstatic speech, a source of pride for the congregation. The **Corinthian** congregation was prideful concerning their possession of special religious knowledge. Despite these problems, their spiritual giftedness confirmed their genuine reception of the gospel testimony.

***<sup>9</sup> God is trustworthy: it was He who called you into fellowship with His Son, Yeshua the Messiah, our Lord.***

**Sha'ul** uses the **Greek** word *koinōnia* here - meaning "to fellowship" or "join together." **God** intended for the **Corinthian Believers** to join because of **Yeshua**; instead, they focused on leaders and teachers, which (among many other things) caused division within their **congregation** (see 1 Cor 1:11–12).

### Regarding Divisions within the Congregation ~ Part 1

#### Warning Against Divisions

***<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, brothers, I call on you in the name of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah to agree, all of you, in what you say, and not to let yourselves remain split into factions but be restored to having a common mind and a common purpose. <sup>11</sup> For some of Chloe's people have made it known to me, my brothers, that there are quarrels among you.***

**Factions.** The **Corinthian** leaders wrote asking specific questions (7:1) but said nothing of this much more important matter, schisms rending the community asunder. Instead, some of Chloe's people made this known to **Sha'ul**. The implication is that the leaders should have reported it themselves.

***<sup>12</sup> I say this because one of you says, "I follow Sha'ul"; another says, "I follow Apollos"; another, "I follow Kefa"; while still another says, "I follow the Messiah!"***

***I follow Sha'ul ... Apollos ... Kefa.*** The Gospel has been perverted into a cult of personality, but loyalty to  
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leaders, thinkers, or denominations must not supersede loyalty to the Messiah. Yet “**I follow the Messiah**” is no better a boast than the others since it proudly disparages all teachers and, supposedly in the name of faithfulness to Yeshua, tries to justify heeding no one. **Apollos** was **Sha’ul**’s successor in Corinth and an influential teacher (Ac 18:24–28). Having lived in Hellenized Alexandria, he may have offered a Greek approach similar to that of the Alexandrian non-Messianic Jew, Philo. **Kefa**, on the other hand, would have emphasized Jewish elements (compare Acts 10–11, Ga 2:11–16). But doctrinal differences and preferences for one person over another must not degenerate into infighting.

*<sup>13</sup> Has the Messiah been split in pieces? Was it Sha’ul who was put to death on a stake for you? Were you immersed into the name of Sha’ul? <sup>14</sup> I thank God I didn’t immerse any of you except Crispus and Gaius - <sup>15</sup> otherwise, someone might say that you were immersed in my name. <sup>16</sup> (Oh yes, I did also immerse Stephanas and his household; beyond that, I can’t remember whether I immersed anyone else.) <sup>17</sup> For the Messiah did not send me to immerse but to proclaim the Good News—and to do it without relying on “wisdom” that consists of mere rhetoric, so as not to rob the Messiah’s execution-stake of its power. <sup>1</sup>*

*I didn’t immerse ... Oh yes, I did ... I can’t remember* - showing that the **Messiah** charged **Sha’ul** to proclaim the **Gospel** (v. 17), with the act of immersing normally being done by others (Yochanan 4:2, Acts 10:48). **Luke** writes that **Crispus** was “the president of the synagogue” (Acts 18:8). Three other people in the **Brit Hadashah** had the common name **Gaius** (Acts 19:29, 20:4; 3 Yochanan 1); this **Gaius** is probably the same as at Romans 16:23. **Stephanas** is mentioned again at I Corinthians 16:15, 17.

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians 1:4-17

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