

Sha'ul of Tarsus & His Letters ~ Part 64

1 Corinthians ~ Part 4

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**.

Regarding Divisions within the Congregation ~ Part 3

Example of Lowliness

²⁶ Just look at yourselves, brothers - look at those whom God has called! Not many of you are wise by the world's standards; not many wield power or boast noble birth.

Not many of you are wise, ... wield power or boast noble birth. Those who consider themselves wise, consequential, or well-born often despise **Christianity** because of its humble origins, but the teachings of **Yeshua** lend no support to such conceit and arrogance. The **Kingdom of God** is for the "poor" (Luke 6:20) and the "poor in spirit" (Mattityahu 5:3), who are willing to set aside vested economic and academic interests to come as little children (Mattityahu 18:1-3). Simple people often have less miseducation to overcome and less attachment to the status quo, which might raise the cost of their coming to faith (see Luke 14:26-33).

²⁷ But God chose what the world considers nonsense in order to shame the wise; God chose what the world considers weak in order to shame the strong;

God **delights** in imparting His all-sufficient power to those who meet the one paradoxical requirement ~ weakness.

~ Charles Stanley

²⁸ and God chose what the world looks down on as common or regards as nothing in order to bring to nothing what the world considers important; ²⁹ so that no one should boast before God.

God chooses the lowly to forestall boasting about anything other than Himself. Compare Ephesians 2:8-9.

³⁰ It is his doing that you are united with the Messiah Yeshua. He has become wisdom for us from God, and righteousness and holiness and redemption as well! ³¹ Therefore - as the Tanakh says - "Let anyone who wants to boast, boast about Adonai."

The entire passage from which this quotation comes is worth citing since its three false bases for boasting are precisely those of v. 26 above:

"Thus says **Adonai**: 'Let not the wise man boast about his wisdom and let not the powerful man boast about his power and let not the rich man boast about his riches. Rather, let anyone who wants to boast, boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am **Adonai** who exercises loving-kindness, justice, and righteousness on the earth because I take pleasure in these things,' says *Adonai*." (Jeremiah 9:22-23(23-24)) Also, Psalm 34:3(2) says, "My soul will boast in *Adonai*; the humble shall hear of it and be glad."¹

Preaching Not Eloquent

Sha'ul describes the nature of his ministry to the **Corinthians**. He reminds them that when he came to **Corinth**, he preached "foolishness" - the message of **Yeshua** crucified - rather than relying on persuasive speech or worldly wisdom.

¹ David H. Stern, Jewish New Testament Commentary.

2¹ As for me, brothers, when I arrived among you, it was not with surpassing eloquence or wisdom that I came announcing to you the previously concealed truth about God; ² for I had decided that while I was with you, I would forget everything except Yeshua the Messiah, and even Him only as someone who had been executed on a stake as a criminal.

Sha'ul reminded the **Corinthian** believers that his message was never based on worldly **wisdom** but on the offensive message of **Yeshua executed on a stake**.

³ Also, I myself was with you as somebody weak, nervous, and shaking all over from fear; ⁴ and neither the delivery nor the content of my message relied on compelling words of "wisdom" but on a demonstration of the power of the Spirit, ⁵ so that your trust might not rest on human wisdom but on God's power. ²

Sha'ul's preaching was not with **compelling words of "wisdom"** but with **power**, as demonstrated by the saving **power of the Spirit**. **Your trust** refers to all who have embraced the **Gospel** by their **trust**. Their conversion and corporate identity in the body of **Believers** resulted from **God's** power.

In our next post, we will continue to explore **Sha'ul's Letters to the Corinthians** beginning in 1 Corinthians 2:6.

² 1 Corinthians 1:26 – 2:5