

# Sha'ul of Tarsus & His Letters ~ Part 70

## 1 Corinthians ~ Part 10

**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**.

**Sha'ul** now deals with the second problem reported to him: **immorality** in the **congregation** and the leaders' refusal to deal with the offender. How sad that such awful sin should be "commonly reported" and thus ruin the **congregation's** testimony! **Sha'ul** gave three reasons the **congregation** had to exercise loving but firm discipline and deal with the offending member.

### Regarding Immorality ~ Part 1

#### Call for Discipline

***<sup>1</sup> It is actually being reported that there is sexual sin among you, and it is a sexual sin of a kind that is condemned even by pagans—a man is living with his stepmother!***

**Stepmother.** More literally, "the wife of his father"; there is no reason for **Sha'ul** to use this roundabout expression to refer to the person's mother. **Reuben**, the firstborn son of **Jacob**, committed this sin with his father's concubine **Bilhah** (Genesis 35:22); therefore, although he had some good characteristics, he was deprived of significant blessing in **Jacob's** final prophecies (Genesis 49:3–4).

***<sup>2</sup> And you stay proud? Shouldn't you rather have felt some sadness that would have led you to remove from your company the man who has done this thing?***

**Sha'ul** connected the problem of ignoring **congregation** discipline to arrogance within the corporate body (v. 6). They were so consumed with **inflated ... pride** that they had been blinded to the most offensive sins within the **congregation** - sins that even pagans in Roman Corinth would not tolerate. They should have **removed** the offender from their fellowship. The purpose of this measure is revealed in verse 5.

***<sup>3</sup> For I myself, even though I am absent physically, am with you spiritually, and I have already judged the man who has done this as if I were present.***

As an apostolic judge, **Sha'ul** issued a "judicial opinion" - a banishment of the offender but with a view toward ultimate restoration. Taking up the language of a legal trial, he used at least ten legal idioms in these verses. Beginning with the phrase **judged the man ... as if I were present**. **Sha'ul's** terms echoed the language from secular courts.

***<sup>4</sup> In the name of the Lord Yeshua, when you are assembled, with me present spiritually and the power of our Lord Yeshua among us, <sup>5</sup> hand over such a person to the Adversary for his old nature to be destroyed, so that his spirit may be saved in the Day of the Lord.***

The command to **hand over such a person to the Adversary** who has committed this sexual sin is one of the most challenging statements to interpret in the **Brit Hadashah**. Removal from the **congregation** symbolizes being transferred to the place of danger, which the man has chosen because of his flagrant sin. Being delivered to Satan is an explicit way to describe the implications of excommunication. Once the man is outside, the church where God rules, all he has is the world, where the devil rules.<sup>1</sup>

#### Danger of Tolerating Sin

***<sup>6</sup> Your boasting is not good. Don't you know the saying, "It takes only a little hametz to leaven a whole batch of dough?" <sup>7</sup> Get rid of the old hametz so that you can be a new batch of dough because, in reality, you are unleavened. For our Pesach lamb, the Messiah has been sacrificed.***

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<sup>1</sup> Douglas Mangum, ed., Lexham Context Commentary: New Testament.

***<sup>8</sup> So let us celebrate the Seder not with leftover hametz, the hametz of wickedness and evil, but with the matzah of purity and truth.***

**Sha'ul** offered a threefold solution to this corporate arrogance: (1) their recognition of what **Yeshua** as their Passover did to deliver them from death; (2) their acknowledgment that **Yeshua** as their Passover rendered them clean (unleavened) before the Lord; and (3) their remembrance that as they observed **Yeshua** as the Passover, they were to purge their household of malice and evil to celebrate with sincerity and truth.

### **Duty of Self-Policing**

***<sup>9</sup> In my earlier letter, I wrote you not to associate with people who engage in sexual immorality.***

***My earlier letter.*** This letter has only survived in the reference to it here. From this, we learn that not everything **Sha'ul** wrote became **Holy Scripture**.

***<sup>10</sup> I didn't mean the sexually immoral people outside your community, or the greedy, or the thieves or the idol-worshippers - for then you would have to leave the world altogether! <sup>11</sup> No, what I wrote you was not to associate with anyone who is supposedly a brother but who also engages in sexual immorality, is greedy, worships idols, is abusive, gets drunk, or steals. With such a person, you shouldn't even eat!***

The **Corinthian Believers** were not to mix with anyone who ***also engages in sexual immorality, is greedy, worships idols, is abusive, gets drunk, or steals***. To **eat** with such people could be taken as a sign of condoning their worldly lifestyle. The **P'rushim** had this same impression of **Yeshua** but were mistaken (Mark 2:16–17).

***<sup>12</sup> For what business is it of mine to judge outsiders? Isn't it those who are part of the community that you should be judging? <sup>13</sup> God will judge those who are outside. Just expel the evildoer from among yourselves. <sup>2</sup>***

**God** will judge all, and a day of judgment is coming (Romans 2:16). Until then, the **congregation** should discipline members who offend clearly and unrepentantly. I know that our home church did that several years ago.

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

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<sup>2</sup> 1 Corinthians 5:1–13. (CJB)