

Sha'ul of Tarsus & His Letters ~ Part 88

1 Corinthians ~ Part 28

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

As I emphasized in my previous post, we are delving into the profound significance of **Sha'ul's Letters to the Corinthians**, a crucial cornerstone of our faith.

Regarding the Resurrection ~ Part 2

Our Resurrection Is Certain

We pick up where we left off in our last post.

²⁰ But the fact is that the Messiah has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have died.

Sha'ul probably wrote this letter between **Pesach** (5:6–8) and **Shavu'ot** (16:8), during the season for presenting the **firstfruits** of the harvest at the **Temple** (Leviticus 23:9–15). Since we know that **Sha'ul** sees in the events and prescriptions of the **Tanakh** prefigurative events, examples, and warnings pointing to **God's** later workings in history (1 Corinthians 9:9–10; 10:1–11; Galatians 4:21–5:1), it is not surprising that he sees **Yeshua's** resurrection as the firstfruits of the larger harvest to come (v. 23 (below); Yochanan 14:3, 19b–20; Romans 8:29).

²¹ For since death came through a man, also the resurrection of the dead has come through a man.

Imagine a game of tug-of-war between life and death. Yeshua grabs the rope on our behalf and pulls us toward life, ensuring that death doesn't stand a chance.

²² For just as in connection with Adam all die, so in connection with the Messiah, all will be made alive.

A similar comparison between **Adam** and **Yeshua** is made in Romans 5:12–21. The comparison is continued in this chapter at vv. 45–49.

²³ But each in his own order: the Messiah is the firstfruits; then those who belong to the Messiah, at the time of his coming; ²⁴ then the culmination, when he hands over the Kingdom to God the Father, after having put an end to every rulership, yes, to every authority and power.

Then, the culmination, which, because the word “then” is repeated, must come after **Yeshua's** return. **Every rulership, ... authority, and power** in the spiritual realm which is not of **God** (compare 2 Corinthians 10:3–4, Ephesians 6:12).

²⁵ For he has to rule until he puts all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be done away with will be death, ²⁷ for “He put everything in subjection under his feet.” But when it says that “everything” has been subjected, obviously, the word does not include God, who is himself the one subjecting everything to the Messiah. ²⁸ Now when everything has been subjected to the Son, then he will subject himself to God, who subjected everything to him; so that God may be everything in everyone.

Verses 27-28 give specifics of the period spoken of in the **Tanakh** at Zechariah 14:9 (**"Adonai will be king over all the earth; on that day Adonai will be One and his name One"**) and Daniel 7:14, referring to the **Messiah** (**"His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away"**). At the end of history, the **Messiah's** eternal rulership, in which the **Messianic Community** participates, is to merge with that of **God the Father**. Thus, **Sha'ul** sums up the final outworking of resurrection.

Conduct Based Upon Hope

Several practical arguments for the reality of the resurrection follow up on the theme of v. 19 in our last post.

²⁹ Were it otherwise, what would the people accomplish who are immersed on behalf of the dead? If the dead are not actually raised, why are people immersed for them?

A controversial verse with uncertain significance, this is the only reference in the **Brit Hadasah** to such a practice. This must be where Mormons get their practice of baptizing their dead relatives.

³⁰ For that matter, we ourselves—why do we keep facing danger hour by hour? ³¹ Brothers, by the right to be proud which the Messiah Yeshua our Lord gives me, I solemnly tell you that I die every day. ³² If my fighting with "wild beasts" in Ephesus was done merely on a human basis, what do I gain by it? If dead people are not raised, we might as well live by the saying, "Let's eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!"

Wild beasts are almost certainly metaphorical for **Sha'ul's** struggles with human opponents of the gospel (Acts 19; 2 Corinthians 1:8–10).

³³ Don't be fooled. "Bad company ruins good character." ³⁴ Come to your senses! Live righteously and stop sinning! There are some people who lack knowledge of God—I say this to your shame. ¹

Sha'ul explains to the **Corinthians** that they must expel the bad company from their midst lest they learn their evil ways (compare 5:5, 7; Rom 16:17–18). **Sha'ul** also tells them they need to wake up and resume helping others learn about **God**.

In our next post, we will eagerly explore **Sha'ul's Letters to the Corinthians**, starting with 1 Corinthians 15:35 and delving deeper into our topic of **Regarding The Resurrection**. Stay tuned for more insights and revelations.

¹ 1 Corinthians 15:20–34.