

Sha'ul of Tarsus & His Letters ~ Part 102

2 Corinthians ~ Part 9

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

As I emphasized in my previous posts, we are delving into the profound significance of **Sha'ul's Letters to the Corinthians**, a crucial cornerstone of our **faith**. This significance is not to be taken lightly but to be deeply understood and appreciated, invoking a sense of the weight of this text's importance in our **faith**. We must grasp the depth of its meaning and its impact on our spiritual journey.

We continue to examine the topic **Regarding Sha'ul's Ministry**, which covers 2 Corinthians 2:14 to 9:15.

Those Who Oppose the Gospel

¹⁴ Do not yoke yourselves together in a team with unbelievers. For how can righteousness and lawlessness be partners? What fellowship does light have with darkness? ¹⁵ What harmony can there be between the Messiah and B'liya'al¹? What does a Believer have in common with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ What agreements can there be between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God—as God said,

***"I will house myself in them...
and I will walk among you.
I will be their God,
and they will be my people."*** ²

¹⁷ Therefore, Adonai says,

***"Go out from their midst,
separate yourselves;
don't even touch what is unclean. ³
Then I myself will receive you. ⁴***

***¹⁸ In fact, I will be your Father,
and you will be my sons and daughters.'
says Adonai-Tzva'ot."***

⁷ ¹ Therefore, my dear friends, since we have these promises, let us purify ourselves from everything that can defile either body or spirit and strive to be completely holy out of reverence for God.

Sha'ul wants his *dear friends in Corinth* (2 Corinthians 6:11 & 7:1) to *open wide* their *hearts* toward him, as he has toward them, and not to **team** up with "pseudo-emissaries" (2 Corinthians 11:13) who are **unbelievers**; indeed, this would be receiving **God's** grace in vain (2 Corinthians 6:1b). Verse 14 is sometimes used to support the principle that **Believers** should not marry (*yoke* themselves *with*) **unbelievers**. One can make a midrash (see glossary) along these lines, but the text's plain sense is not concerned with marriage. A believing widow is enjoined not to marry an unbeliever (1 Corinthians 7:39). From a **Jewish** viewpoint, intermarriage is usually understood to imply assimilation.

So, how should we look at this passage in our modern times? Set boundaries that uphold Biblical principles to create a culture of purity and sanctification within your home. Encourage open communication with family

¹ Another Hebrew name for Satan.

² Leviticus 26:12

³ Isaiah 52:11

⁴ Ezekial 20:34

members about the importance of living a life that pleases **God**. Foster an environment where love, respect, and honor for **God** are prioritized in all aspects of your household.

Pleading for Fellowship

² Make room for us in your hearts—we haven't wronged anyone, we haven't corrupted anyone, we haven't exploited anyone. ³ I am not saying this to put blame on you, for I have already said that you have a place in our hearts, whether we live together or die together; ⁴ that I am very confident in you; that I am very proud of you; that you have filled me with encouragement; and that in spite of all our troubles, I am overflowing with joy.

The “pseudo-emissaries” persuaded some **Corinthians** that **Sha'ul** had *wronged, corrupted, and defrauded* them. He vigorously denied this. He believed he and the **Corinthians** shared common destinies. **Sha'ul** broke into an exuberant expression of gratitude for the success of **Titus's** mission to **Corinth**. **Sha'ul's** ministry among them had not been in vain but, at last, had proven successful.

Joy at the News of Your Attitude

⁵ For indeed, when we came into Macedonia, our bodies had no rest. On the contrary, we faced all kinds of troubles—altercations without apprehensions within. ⁶ But God, who encourages the downhearted, encouraged us with the arrival of Titus! ⁷ However, it was not only his arrival that encouraged us but also how encouraged he was about you, as he told us how you long to see me, how distressed you are over my situation, how zealous you are in my defense—this news made me even happier! ⁵

Sha'ul was returning to a narration of his travels. **Philippi** and **Thessalonica** were prominent **Macedonian** cities where the **emissary** had earlier planted **Kehilah's** (Acts 16–17). His conflicts and fears were not only because of the everyday pressure of ministry but primarily because of his anguish over the state of the **Corinthian Believers**. **God** uses human agents to bring divine comfort (2 Corinthians 1:3–7). **God's** comfort came to **Sha'ul** through **Titus** because of the **Corinthians'** repentance.

In our next post, we will continue to examine **Sha'ul's Second Letter to the Corinthians**. Stay tuned for more insights and revelations.

⁵ 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:7.