

Sha'ul of Tarsus & His Letters ~ Part 103

2 Corinthians ~ Part 10

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.

In moments of tension or unresolved conflicts within your family or close relationships, refer to 2 Corinthians 7:8-16. Take the initiative to reach out, initiate a dialogue, and express your willingness to mend broken relationships.

Joy in Their Zeal

⁸ If I caused you pain by my letter, ¹ I do not regret it. Even if I did regret it before—for I do see that that letter did distress you, though only for a short time—⁹ now I rejoice not because you were pained, but because the pain led you to turn back to God. For you handled the pain in God's way so that you were not harmed by us at all. ¹⁰ Pain handled in God's way produces a turning from sin to God, which leads to salvation, and there is nothing to regret about that! But pain handled in the world's way produces only death.

The Greek word used in 2 Corinthians 7:10, "**a turning from sin**," is **metanoia**. It means "**to change your mind**." It means to be going in one direction, then to change your mind, turn around, and go in the other direction.

~ J. Vernon McGee
Thru the Bible, Vol. 11

There are two ways of handling **pain** (or "sorrow" or "sadness"). Ungodly sorrow, merely being sad or experiencing pain, has no virtue. It is concerned with the self, not with **God** or with others who have been harmed, and it leads to self-hatred, self-pity, depression, despair, and death. **Godly** sorrow, on the other hand, leads to repentance, **t'shuvah** (turning from sin to God), making restitution for wrongs, and resolving to act righteously. **God** is not interested in us merely feeling sorry for having sinned but in our resolute turning from that sin and not doing it again when similarly tempted.

¹¹ For just look at what handling the pain God's way produced in you! What earnest diligence, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what readiness to put things right! In everything, you have proved yourselves blameless in the matter.

Sha'ul reminded the **Corinthians** of the specific occasion, which **Titus** reported to him when godly grieving had finally entered their **Kehilah**.

¹² So even though I wrote to you, it was not for the sake of either the one who did the wrong or the one wronged, but so that before God you could see for yourselves how deep is your devotion

¹ **The letter** refers to the severe (and now lost) letter written after 1 Corinthians.

to us. ^{13a} This is the reason we have been encouraged.

Sha'ul was more concerned about the relationship between the **Corinthians** and himself (as **talmidim** to their spiritual father than he was about the troublemaker.

Joy Regarding Titus

^{13b} Besides our own encouragement, we had the even greater joy of seeing how happy Titus was because all of you set his mind at rest. ¹⁴ For I had boasted somewhat about you to him, and now I have not been made to look foolish. On the contrary, just as everything we have said to you is true, so too our boasting in front of Titus has proved true. ¹⁵ And his affection for you is all the greater as he remembers how ready you were to obey and how you received him with reverence and respect. ¹⁶ I am glad that I can have such complete confidence in you. ²

In these verses, **Sha'ul** further explains the reasons for his joy in meeting up with **Titus**. He rejoiced because **Titus'** own apprehensions had been dispelled upon his arrival in **Corinth**, and his mind set at rest. He rejoiced too that his confidence boasting to **Titus** about the fundamental attitudes of the **Corinthian Kehilah** as a whole, despite their earlier failure to defend their apostle when he was maligned, had been proved true.

Sha'ul's pride in them had been justified. He also rejoiced because he saw that **Titus'** own heart now went out to these **Corinthians** as he remembered their obedience (to the demands made in **Sha'ul's** 'severe' letter) and the fear and trembling with which they received him (evidence of the respect in which they held **Sha'ul** and his apostolic team, evidence in turn that they were guiltless in the matter of personal attacks upon **Sha'ul**). In verse 16, **Sha'ul** concludes this central section of the letter with a great expression of confidence in the **Kehilah**. Such an expression of confidence stands in stark contrast to the way **Sha'ul** addresses the same people in chapters 10–13 (esp. 2 Corinthians 11:3–4, 19–20), and this is one of the main factors which leads many scholars to see in chapters 10–13 the remains of a subsequent letter of **Sha'ul**.

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

² 2 Co 7:8–16.