

Sha'ul of Tarsus & His Letters ~ Part 112

2 Corinthians ~ Part 19

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

As I have 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 deeply understood and appreciated. Your active engagement in grasping the depth of its meaning and impact on our spiritual journey is not just crucial. Still, it also shows your responsibility to understand the importance of this text in our faith.

We continue to examine the **Defense of Sha'ul's Apostleship**, which covers 2 Corinthians 10:1 to 13:14. In this post, we begin in Chapter 13:1.

Do you find it challenging to live out your faith authentically in all aspects of your life? Remember, 2 Corinthians 13 is here to guide you. Use it to strengthen your faith through action. Identify areas where your actions may not align with your beliefs and take intentional steps to live out your faith in your words and deeds consistently.

Regarding Troublemakers

13¹ This will be the third time that I have come to visit you. Any charge must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.

Any charge must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. Sha'ul applies the biblical, **Jewish** evidential standard of Deuteronomy 19:15 in a non-**Jewish** legal context. Therefore, it cannot be said, as some **Christians** do, that the **Torah's** "civil law" was abolished by the **Brit Hadashah**.

2 To those who sinned in the past and to the rest I say beforehand while absent the same thing I said when I was with you the second time: if I come again I will not spare you—³ since you are looking for proof of the Messiah speaking in me. He is not weak in dealing with you, but he is powerful among you. ⁴ For although he was executed on a stake in weakness, now he lives by God's power. And we too are weak in union with him, but in dealing with you we will live with him by God's power.

Sha'ul would not be lenient on his planned third visit to the Corinthian believers. His sense of apostolic authority is nowhere more evident than in this verse. **Sha'ul** identified himself with Christ, whose authority he bore. Christ's crucifixion and **Sha'ul's** ministry might be taken as proof that they were weak, but the resurrection showed Christ's power, which **Sha'ul** shared.

Each to Examine Himself

5 Examine yourselves to see whether you are living the life of trust. Test yourselves. Don't you realize that Yeshua the Messiah is in you?—unless you fail to pass the test.

These present-tense verbs (**test, examine**) could be translated as "keep on testing" and "keep on examining." A **Believer** never surpasses the need for regular self-examination (1 Cor. 11:28; Galatians 6:4).

The one seeking to identify his call to vocational ministry must first be sure he is called to Christ.

~ John F. MacArthur

⁶ But I hope you will realize that we are not failures. ⁷ And we pray to God that you will do nothing wrong. We are not concerned with our appearing successful but with your doing what is right, even if we appear to be failures. ⁸ For we cannot act against the truth, only for it. ⁹ So we rejoice whenever we are weak, and you are strong; indeed, what we pray for is that you become perfect. ¹⁰ I write these things while away from you so that when I am with you, I will not have to use my authority to deal sharply with you, for the Lord gave it to me for building up and not for tearing down.

We have no evidence to prove that **Sha'ul** could make another trip to **Corinth**.

Exhortations and Greetings

¹¹ And now, brothers, shalom! Put yourselves in order, pay attention to my advice, be of one mind, and live in shalom—and the God of love and shalom will be with you.

¹² Greet one another with a holy kiss.

No one is sure precisely what a **holy kiss** was. Indeed, it was some sort of physical expression of warmth and love involving a hug, an embrace, a kiss, touching, closeness—but entirely free of improper and inappropriate overtones. In **Isra'el**, **Arab men** and **Jewish men** from **Middle Eastern** backgrounds often greet each other by kissing on both cheeks.

¹³ All God's people send greetings to you.

Benediction

***¹⁴ The grace of the Lord Yeshua the Messiah,
the love of God
and the fellowship of the Ruach HaKodesh
be with you all. ¹***

The wording of this benediction implies equality between the sources of **grace**, **love**, and fellowship—that is, between the Father (God), the Son (the Lord Yeshua the Messiah), and the Holy Spirit (**the Ruach HaKodesh**). However, this equality remains an implication and is not stated as a proposition. As pointed out elsewhere, **Adonai** is never called a "**Trinity**" in the **Brit Hadashah**. However, the three terms that appear here and equivalent terms are used in various ways in both the **Brit Hadashah** and the **Tanakh** when speaking of **God**.

Sha'ul Arrives in Greece

***² He went through that area and, after saying much to encourage them, passed on to Greece,
³ where he spent three months. ²***

F. LaGard Smith inserts this short passage from the **Acts of the Apostles** before we move on to the following Letter we will examine.

In our next post, we examine **Sha'ul's Letter to the Romans**.

¹ 2 Corinthians 13:1-14.

² Acts 20:2-3.